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THE PRIVILEGE
OF THOSE
WHO ARE BORN OF GOD;
OR,
A PLAIN RATIONAL VIEW
OF THE
NATURE AND EXTENT OF SANCTIFICATION.

“Ye must be born again.” John, iii. 7.

“Be ye *holy* for I am *holy*.”

“And the very God of peace *sanctify* you *wholly*.”

1 Thes. v. 23.

BY JOHN HERSEY.

BALTIMORE:
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P R E F A C E .

A FEW years since we published a small volume upon the subject of Sanctification, or Holiness of Heart; but as our views and sentiments were not satisfactory to some of our brethren on the ground, that in their estimation, they were not in accordance with the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as taught by Mr. Wesley, and as our motive was, (and we hope ever will be,) to do good and not evil—the sale and circulation of the book (except to a few friends) was immediately stopped. As that book was published hastily, and under very unfavourable circumstances, we have, for the following reasons concluded to publish another edition revised and corrected, which we hope will not only be less offensive,

but acceptable and profitable to all our friends who may condescend to give it a careful and candid perusal.

First.—After a careful examination we find our views fully sustained and confirmed by sentiments *occasionally* expressed by Mr. Wesley, and nearly all of our standard writers; therefore, the charge that our sentiments are opposed to the doctrine uniformly taught by Mr. Wesley, cannot be *consistently* preferred against us.

Secondly.—Another and important reason for publishing the present edition, is to obviate or remove an improper impression which has been made on the minds of many of our friends. Our sentiments are not generally understood, and have been in many instances, greatly perverted. Many of our friends think and assert—“he believes that when a soul is converted it is also *sanctified*, thus making no distinction between the work of regeneration and sanctification:”—and with an air of honest, holy zeal, they cry out—“away with such a fellow from the earth, and let his heretical doctrine perish with him.”

Were our friends to assert that we believe a little child six months old is a full grown man,

they would do us great injustice ; they would not only misrepresent our sentiments, but they would rob us of every vestige of common sense. But when they say “we believe that an infant six months or six weeks old, is as perfect in its sphere as a young or an old man, they express our views correctly. Were it affirmed that we believe there is no difference between a dime and a dollar, it would be not only a misrepresentation, but it would (if true) stamp our character with the broad mark of lunacy ; but when our friends or our enemies, say that we believe a dime is as pure silver as a dollar, we plead guilty to the charge. To obviate those difficulties, we have endeavored to express our sentiments with a greater degree of perspicuity in the present, than they were expressed in the former edition.

Truth cannot suffer from investigation ; darkness alone can obscure its native loveliness, while the only drapery it seeks to ornament and beautify its form and features, is the pure, unsullied garb of *light*. The volume of revelation, unfolded by the aid of the Holy Spirit and the voice of reason, is the only source from whence all our *light* should emanate.

Thirdly.—Many of our brethren in the ministry, and some of them as well qualified to judge of sound doctrine as any minister or member in the Methodist Episcopal Church, have examined and approved our sentiments, and firmly believe them to be strictly and scripturally correct.

Fourthly.—Very few of our members or ministers profess to enjoy the blessing of perfect love, or entire sanctification. This circumstance proves that there are serious difficulties in the way; and should our feeble efforts to simplify the doctrine so that it may be more generally and fully understood, have a tendency to elicit action, and awake a spirit of affectionate inquiry, it will no doubt be attended with salutary consequences, which is the ardent desire and prayer of the Author.

THE PRIVILEGE
OF THOSE
WHO ARE BORN OF GOD.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

REFLECTIONS ON MAN'S FALLEN CONDITION.

MAN originally bore the express image of his Creator; but, as Almighty God is a Spirit existing without either body or parts, this likeness must have been particularly confined to his spiritual existence, and more especially to his moral faculties; yet were our first parents made *morally, intellectually and physically perfect*. There was no flaw nor defect in man's original formation, or in his character; all was *light, and beauty, and perfection*: he shone in the unsullied image of his heavenly Father. Soon however, we are called to contemplate and weep over a total reversion of the whole picture. Man rebelled—abused his liberty, and fell—fell from the high and holy eminence which he occupied, into the deepest abyss of sin, misery, and ruin. Having forfeited the favor of his heavenly Father, he lost also his *image*. Having alienated himself from the arms of his legitimate Father, he became the adopted child of

a spurious parent, who is a corrupt and an unholy being—"ye are of your father the devil."

In this fatal transaction he necessarily changed his character *and his complexion*. The soul which was formed with infinite wisdom and benevolence, and shone with transcendant lustre, instantly became a chaotic mass of darkness and deformity. The solemn declaration of his Creator was, "in the day thou eatest of the fruit of the tree which standeth in the midst of the garden, thou shalt *surely* DIE." He accordingly died the same day—the *same hour* death spread a veil of midnight gloom over all his spiritual glory; and had it not been for the merciful interposition of the second Adam—had not the Son of God reached out the hand of his redeeming love, he must, with all his unborn posterity, have sunk forever into an abyss profound, without one ray of light to cheer his wretched abode, the deep dark dungeon of eternal ruin. Had not a Saviour been provided for and promised to guilty, degraded, ruined man *unasked for*, even the morning star of *hope* would never have shed one ray of light upon his eternal night of misery. In view of God's redeeming love, in providing a remedy for man's ruined condition, his body was spared for a *time*, which otherwise would have been instantly turned into a mass of corruption, the image and essence of *death*. That man in the fall, lost entirely the image of God, and received the complete likeness of the devil, we have conclusive evidence in God's own word. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every ima-

gination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. vi. 5. It was not therefore, a *partial* fall. In his wretched character we do not perceive *much* guilt and a *little* innocence—he is altogether guilty and corrupt—the very imagination of his thoughts are evil—Nor has he any intervals of reason or sanity of mind—"continually." He now bears fully the very image of his adopted father, the devil. We are aware that this is a dark, but it is a true picture.

The apostle to the Gentiles, with his masterly hand, paints the scene in still more glowing colors—he says, "There is none righteous, no not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes." Rom. iii. 10—18. Our divine Master compares the fallen heart of man to a *cage of unclean* birds and to a den of vipers.

Hence we may say, without fear of successful contradiction, that man when he fell, or rebelled against God, lost the moral image of his Creator totally, and gained the complete and entire likeness of the devil. He became

1. *Guilty* and condemned before God.

2. He lost the life and power of God. He *spiritually died*.

3. He became *polluted* and *defiled*.

CHAPTER II.

THE SINNER'S PARDON, OR JUSTIFICATION BEFORE GOD.

Having, in the preceding chapter shown man's undone and ruined condition by the fall, we proceed now, carefully to examine the great work of his salvation, in its *commencement—progress, and consummation*.

In man's fallen and ruined condition, his merciful Creator cast upon him an eye of compassion. Infinite wisdom devised means whereby his *banished* should not be expelled. It laid help upon one who was mighty to save, and fully able to redeem to the uttermost all who will come unto God through Jesus Christ.

The great work of redemption is designed to restore *guilty, dead, defiled* man to the *favor* and image of God on earth, and to the blessings of immortality and eternal life in heaven.

Although the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy One of Israel, is the author and finisher of our faith, and of the whole work of redemption—although his own arm brought salvation—although He is our Alpha and our Omega; yet are there certain parts, or *duties* assigned to man which he must perform or he cannot be saved; and other parts

which belong exclusively to God. It is man's duty to *repent*, *believe* and *obey*; which part, or duty, however, he can perform only through and by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath appeared unto all mankind, and is offered to them as freely as the air they breathe, or the water they drink. Secondly it belongs to God alone, to *pardon*, *regenerate* and *purify*.

As sin has disordered and defiled the whole stream of our fallen nature, man may naturally be expected to perform his part, his work in a very imperfect and defective manner; but that which belongs exclusively to God—that part which none but an omnipotent hand can effect, must be done *perfectly*, otherwise it would reflect dishonor on his name and character. This plain position may be illustrated by adverting to the husbandman. God alone can make our bread, all the men on earth could not make one grain of corn, it is exclusively *God's work*; man's part in making the corn is to prepare the ground, to plant and then cultivate the soil—but God alone can give the increase. Man may act his part very defectively—in a very slothful imperfect manner, which may very materially affect the appearance—the weight and quality of the grain; but this will not change or affect the essential character or properties of the grain; in its organization every thing is perfect—there is no admixture of the surrounding weed, or briar, or thorn to be found in its composition, however weak and sickly it may be owing to man's sloth or ignorance, or the poverty of the soil.

Having laid down these plain incontrovertible premises, we proceed to examine, that part of our redemption which pertains to *guilt*. It is God's prerogative alone, to remove our guilt by pardoning our sins, by blotting out our transgressions. In the act of pardon does the king leave *one* sin unpardoned? Does he say to the broken hearted penitent, I forgive thee *nearly all* thy sins; there is, however, *one* which I cannot *now* forgive. Or is there one sin which is too diminutive to attract the notice of Jehovah's eye, or too great to be met by his power and clemency? Such an idea is absurd in the extreme; when God pardons, he blots out *every sin* freely and fully for Christ's sake: if one jot or tittle remain unpardoned it would amount to no pardon at all. If the culprit steals only *one cent*, that act renders him as entirely guilty as if he had stolen ten thousand dollars; it therefore follows of necessity that all and every offence must be forgiven, freely pardoned, or the culprit could not stand justified in the eye of the law. Guilty man's *part* in this transaction is to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and however imperfectly he may perform this duty, either through ignorance or impotence, yet when his redeeming God forgives, or pardons, he acts not like imperfect, impotent man; but perfectly, and, freely pardons all and every past sin and transgression.

CHAPTER III.

THE NATURE OF THE NEW BIRTH, OR REGENERATION.

The new birth ; the work of *regeneration*—that important work which is effected in, and for us when our hearts are created anew in Christ Jesus.

An important point to be decided in this great work, is, to ascertain definitely whether God creates the *whole heart anew*, or whether he brings his children into spiritual existence in an impure, or an imperfect state, altogether unlike himself, and diverse from all his other works manifested in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and all things which are therein.

In pursuing this inquiry we have only to ascertain whether the work of *regeneration* is *exclusively* an act of the divine hand, or whether it is in part the work of man? This is a plain and simple, but a very important question to be decided, as we have already proved, (if proof of a self-evident principle be necessary or even practicable,) that God's work must invariably and necessarily bear the divine stamp of perfection.

If proof was necessary we might refer to the Holy Book to prove incontestably, that the work of regeneration is exclusively the work of God, consequently it must be perfect in all its parts—there can be no flaw—no defect—no exuberance or deficiency, or it would reflect dishonor upon the name of Israel's God. No part

of the heart can be left unrenewed when this important change is effected. It may be said by the objector, that Deity can effect an imperfect work, which is proved in the case of one born blind, or otherwise mentally or physically defective, which frequently occurs. We answer, that this is not God's ordinary manner of working—that the few instances which occur where those blots are perceptible, stand rather as frowning signals—as severe judgments manifested against sin; and are designed no doubt, as admonitory lessons for proud, rebellious man's benefit. There is, however, no departure from the high and holy principles of justice and righteousness in those displays of God's righteous indignation against sin; but were Almighty God to create ordinarily immortal souls anew in Christ Jesus in an imperfect or defiled state, it would tarnish all his glorious attributes.

Man's part in the great work of *regeneration* is to *believe*, and however weak or defective his *faith* may be, it cannot influence a pure and holy God to perform his work in a defective manner. As in the case already adverted to, of the young plant of corn, there is found no particle of the weed or briar in its organization, however slothfully or imperfectly the farmer may prepare the ground: so in conversion or the *new birth*; when God creates the heart anew in Christ Jesus, none of the principles of the bitter weeds and briars of sin can be found intermingled with the heavenly materials of which the *new heart* is composed, otherwise it would not be a *NEW*, it would only be a *repaired* or *improved heart*.

It is true, as in the case of the slothful farmer, owing to man's ignorance or unbelief, the new born soul may be very weak and feeble, and through the sloth and unbelief of the young convert, the *roots of bitterness* may very soon spring up, and not only defile, but deform and destroy the newly created soul.

It is of great importance that this principle be fully and fairly understood, that the censure or blame may fall where it should. If God creates the soul anew and brings it into spiritual existence in a defective state, the fault must devolve on Deity, which no rational being will admit. But if the Lord Jesus creates the heart of man anew, as he has created all things either in heaven or on earth, viz. in a perfect state, it behooves man to watch and pray, that by diligence and care and the grace of God, he may keep his new born soul free from the contaminating influence of earth and sin.

Respecting the *new birth*, Mr. Wesley says—"From hence it necessarily appears what is the *new birth*. It is that great change which God works in the soul, when he brings it into life, when he raises it from the death of sin, to the life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the Almighty Spirit of God, when it is created anew in Christ Jesus, when it is renewed after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness; when the love of the world is changed into the love of God; pride into humility; passion into meekness: hatred, envy, malice, into a sincere, tender, disinterested love for all mankind. In a word, it is that change where-

by the earthly, sensual, devilish mind is changed in to the mind which was in Christ Jesus. This is the nature of the *new birth*; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Sermon on the New Birth. And in his notes on the New Testament, John iii, 6, "*And that which is born of the spirit is spirit*" Mr. Wesley remarks—"is spiritual, heavenly, divine, like its author." And upon the following verse—"Ye must be born again,"—he says, "To be born again is to be inwardly changed from *all sinfulness to all holiness.*"

Agreeable to the above rational and scriptural sentiments expressed by that great man of God, the new birth is a perfect work—it must be so, because it is the work of an Almighty hand.

Dr. Adam Clark, a learned divine, and popular and laborious commentator, says, in his comment on John iii, 3,—“The new birth which is here spoken of, comprehends not only what is termed justification, or pardon, but also sanctification, or holiness. Sin must be pardoned and the impurity of the heart washed away, before any soul can possibly enter into the kingdom of God. As the new birth implies the renewing of the whole soul in righteousness and true holiness, it is not a matter that can be dispensed with; heaven is a place of holiness, and nothing but what is like itself can ever enter into it.” On the 6th verse he remarks, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” This is the answer to the objection made by Nicodemus in verse 4, ‘can a man enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ Our Lord here intimates that was this possible,

it would not answer the end; for the plant will ever be of the nature of the seed that produces it—like will beget its like. The kingdom of God is spiritual and holy; and that which is born of the Spirit resembles the Spirit; for as he is who beget, so is he, who is begotten of him.”

These sentiments perfectly accord with the principles of reason and righteousness, and God’s own word, and prove incontestably, that the new birth is a perfect work, resembling its great Author.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF SANCTIFICATION CONSIDERED IN ITS COMMENCEMENT, PROGRESS; AND CONSUMMATION.

We now proceed to examine another branch of the great work of redemption, the important work of *sanctification*.

The term sanctification sometimes means the entire dedication of persons or things for special or sacred purposes—the seventh day was sanctified, viz: set apart for holy purposes. Gen. ii, 3. The *temple*, and the *vessels of the Lord’s house*, were sanctified or set apart for the special purpose of God’s worship. The Levites were sanctified or set apart to the service of the temple—the sanctuary, &c. Ex. xix, xxix, xxx. Lev. xvi, xxvii. Numb. xxxi, 6, &c.

Again, the term sanctification implies *purity*—*holiness of heart*. God is *holy*, and nothing im-

pure or unholy can be pleasing in his sight; hence he says to fallen man, "be ye holy for I am *holy*." Lev, xi, 45; xx, 7. 1 Peter i, 15. Heb. xii, 14. 1 Thes. v, 23. John xvii, 17. Ephes. v, 26. Heb. xiii, 12.

Our remarks on the present occasion shall therefore be confined exclusively to that branch of sanctification which refers to the heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Matt. v, 8. "Without *holiness* no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii, 14. Seeing that this divine principle is essential to our salvation—to our present and eternal happiness, it will be important to examine carefully the commencement and the progress of this great blessing.

Mr. Wesley says, 1. "By sanctification or holiness, I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbors, ruling our tempers, words and actions. 2. As to manner. I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a single act of faith, consequently in an instant. But I believe a gradual work both preceding and following that instant." Works, vol. vi, 531.

From this high authority we learn that *sanctification* means *love*—to love God with *all* our *heart*, strength and mind, and our neighbor (viz. all mankind) as *ourselves*. It is the image of our heavenly Father impressed on the soul by the power and efficacy of the Holy Ghost—God is **LOVE**, and when the soul is sanctified wholly, like its heavenly Father, it is *all love*. Mr. Wesley says that sanctification is *instantaneous* in its commencement, and *gradual* in its *progress*. It

will be gratifying and important to know definitely when this work begins and when it is consummated.

To learn when this important work begins, or when the instantaneous part of it is effected, we cannot refer to better authority than Mr. Wesley. In his thoughts on christian perfection, he asks, "When does inward sanctification begin?" and answers, "In the moment a man is justified; (yet sin remains in him, yea, the seed of sin, until he is sanctified throughout) from that time, the believer gradually dies to sin and grows in grace." There must be an *instant*, a *moment*, when every work which is effected on earth is begun, and also a point of time, or a definite moment when it is finished, or completed. Mr. Wesley has given us the *first impulse*—the very moment when the great work of sanctification is commenced, viz. the moment a soul is *justified*, or *born again*; and in respect to the period or instant when this work is finished or consummated, he says,—“As to time, I believe the instant to be the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before.” Works, vol. vi, p. 531-2.

Here we have the beginning and the end or the consummation of the work of sanctification clearly specified by one of the greatest divines of his own or any other age, the inspired apostles and prophets excepted. Mr. Wesley lays the foundation of this work at the proper time, and the correct place, viz. the moment of conversion. God cannot create an impure or an unclean heart—consequently, when he creates the soul

anew, the embryo work of sanctification is also effected. Some however have blended the *mature* and the infantile work of sanctification together, now when we unite those things which God has separated, or when we separate that which God has joined together, we must err, and the result will always be confusion.

Mr. Wesley has not only specified the point of time, or the instant when this work is begun, and when it is ended, but in his sermon on God's vineyard, he has filled up to our view the intermediate space, thus giving us a view of the whole picture in a finished and perfect state. He says under the first head, section 5,

"It has been frequently observed, that very few were clear in their judgment, both with regard to justification and sanctification. Many who have spoken and written admirably well, concerning justification, had no clear conception, nay, were totally ignorant of the doctrine of sanctification. Who has wrote more ably than Martin Luther, on justification by faith alone? And who was more ignorant of the doctrine of sanctification, or more confused in his conceptions of it? In order to be thoroughly convinced of this, of his total ignorance with regard to sanctification, there needs no more than to read over, without prejudice, his celebrated comment on the epistle to the Galatians. On the other hand, how many writers of the Romish church (as Francis Sales and Juan de Castaniza, in particular) have wrote strongly and scripturally on sanctification; who, nevertheless, were entirely

unacquainted with the nature of justification? Insomuch that the whole body of their divines at the council of Trent, in their *Catechismus ad Parochos*, (catechism which every parish priest is to teach his people,) totally confound sanctification and justification. But it has pleased God to give the Methodists a full and clear knowledge of each, and the wide difference between them.

“6. They know, indeed, that at the same time a man is justified, sanctification properly begins. For when he is justified, he is “born again,” “born from above,” “born of the Spirit:” which, although it is not (as some suppose) the whole process of sanctification, is doubtless the gate of it. Of this, likewise, God has given them a full view. They know the new birth implies as great a change in the soul, in him that is “born of the spirit,” as was wrought in his body when he was born of a woman: not an outward change only, as from drunkenness to sobriety, from robbery or theft to honesty, (this is the poor, dry, miserable conceit of those that know nothing of real religion,) but an inward change from all unholy, to all holy tempers; from pride to humility; from passionateness to meekness; from peevishness and discontent, to patience and resignation: in a word, from an earthly, sensual, devilish mind, to the mind that was in Christ Jesus

“7. It is true, a late very eminent author, in his strange treatise on regeneration, proceeds entirely on the supposition, that it is the whole gradual progress of sanctification. No; it is only

the threshold of sanctification; the first entrance upon it. And as, in the natural birth, a man is born at once, and then grows larger and stronger by degrees; so in the spiritual birth, a man is born at once, and then gradually increases in spiritual stature and strength. The new birth, therefore, is the first point of sanctification, which may increase more and more unto the perfect day."* Wesley's Sermons, cxii—Isaiah v, 4.

This rational and scriptural view of the subject, obviates many difficulties, and gives us a clear and distinct view of the whole ground-work and superstructure of the noble edifice of sanctification. Hence it appears that there is an instant when the work of sanctification is commenced, which is the moment of justification, or when the soul is born again. There is also an instant—a moment when this great work is finished or consummated, which is the instant of death, when the soul ceases to grow and expand—when it reaches the utmost summit of a *mature perfection*, having passed through its probation on earth, and thereby becomes fully prepared for the richer joys of heaven.

The idea, therefore, that when God creates the heart anew in Christ Jesus, it is at that moment imperfect and defiled with that which a pure and holy God hates, viz. inbred sin, or the remains of the carnal mind, which is enmity

*Those sentiments delivered by that great man of God, are in perfect accordance with our own; therefore, although Mr. Wesley has expressed different views and sentiments, yet are we as fully authorized to receive one as the other.

against God, is contrary to the dictates of reason and God's revealed word.

Our Saviour compares the kingdom of God (which no doubt includes the whole process of religion in the heart) to a grain of mustard seed. Therefore, from the process of vegetation, we may learn an important lesson of instruction. The plant is perfect when it first appears above the ground; yet it grows daily, and in its growth is constantly developing new beauties, and latent qualities, which were at first invisible. But at its birth or first appearance, it was *pure*, unmixed with any other vegetable matter—there were none of the properties of the oak in its organization; neither does it partake of the nature or appearance of the noxious weeds and briars by which it is surrounded. Although the tassel and grain were concealed from the ken of mortals when the plant first appeared to view, yet did they at that time exist, but in an embryo state: all its properties were brought into a state of mature perfection after its first appearance, by a gradual—regular process. Every shower of rain in its season refreshes and invigorates the plant. Christians are as dependent on our Lord Jesus Christ, for the showers of his grace and mercy, if they grow and prosper, as vegetation is dependent on the showers of rain from the clouds for its strength, vigor and perfection.

The Lord Jesus informs us that we must be converted, and become as **LITTLE CHILDREN**, or we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven; this subject may therefore be satisfactorily illus-

trated by adverting to the condition of a family of good children. The infant only six or twelve months old is a *perfect babe*, yet it can neither speak or walk; the parents, however, are not ashamed of those infantile infirmities. They are perfectly willing to present their little child before the king, or the philosopher, or the moralist, or the learned and pious divine. They fear nothing from the strictest investigation of its character; those distinguished characters unhesitatingly and unanimously pronounce the infant not only a lovely and interesting, but in every respect a *perfect child*. Their eldest son, twenty-one years of age, favored with talents of the highest order, and a mind cultivated in the best manner, even surpassing all others of his age in learning, piety and wisdom, is not more perfect, more amiable, nor more honorable than his infant brother. The parents are just as willing to hear those competent judges pass their opinion upon the character of their infant child, as they are to receive their testimony respecting their experienced and accomplished son; both are alike dear to the parents, and equally honorable in their character. The same may be said of all the children; they were all without deformity or blemish when they were *born*, and have all improved their time and talents perfectly; yet as they advance in years, each one rises higher than his junior brother or sister; yet all of them are *perfect* in their respective spheres, and prepared at a moment's warning, to meet the scrutinizing eye of the most competent judges, who would

be constrained to pronounce them all, not only good, but perfectly good; yet the eldest must necessarily excel all the rest in his attainments, but not in the perfection of his character, nor the purity of his person.

The family are always prepared to meet every occurring contingency. Call who may, or at any hour, there is no cause for the blush of shame to mantle upon the cheek of their parents. Such should be the character and condition of God's family on earth. Our divine Redeemer speaks to all the family and says, "Be ye also *ready*, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." He is a just and holy God, and also a kind and indulgent Father; therefore when he comes to call on his earthly family to give an account of their stewardship, he will not expect to find the babe in Christ, a young man, or a father in Israel; neither will he be pleased to find one who should be a young man, or a father, weak and feeble as an infant. Nor will he be honored as a sovereign, or pleased as a father, to find either his infant, or his aged children stained or polluted more or less with moral defilement. This view of the subject honors God, and also his earthly family.

Let us, however, take another view of this subject. Suppose the family adverted to, or only one member thereof (a daughter) is evidently defective in her moral character. She is not perfectly honorable in her conduct, nor entirely virtuous in her habits; would her parents feel no pain or mortification arising from this circum-

stance? Would they console themselves by saying "it is perfectly natural for all children in early life to be dishonest—to depart occasionally from the elevated principles of *virtue*—that they are all born with those blemishes attached to their nature, but in riper years they will see their error—when our daughter becomes a wife, the conjugal ties will perfect that which is now lacking in her moral character; she will then become perfectly honest and virtuous."

Would such an apology, however dexterously made and thrown around the stained character of their daughter by the soft hand of parental affection, shield either her parents or herself from reproach and shame?

From the foregoing arguments, and also from the sentiments of Mr. Wesley adverted to, it plainly appears that when the soul is regenerated—born again—begotten of God, the foundation of the great work of sanctification is laid; but the superstructure is not at that time completed. It therefore becomes necessary that the young convert should go on to a state of *mature* perfection, by giving all diligence to add to his *faith*, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, *charity*. Thus as new born babes they should receive the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby.

The beloved disciple addresses himself to *little children, young men, and fathers* in the

gospel. It is not reasonable to suppose that the different stages in life to which the apostle adverts were identified by sin or moral defilement. He cannot mean to convey an idea that the *little children* were defiled with sin—that the young men were more pure, and the fathers in Israel alone were *holy*. *Experience*, we presume, and *diligence* which imparts strength to the body, marked their progress from little children to young men, and from young men to fathers in Israel. Had those little children been called from earth in their infantile state, they would have been received joyfully into heaven, where nothing sinful or defiled can ever enter.

If indeed God creates the heart anew in an impure, or in a defective state, it must be either because he is *unable* or *unwilling* to create it otherwise. It cannot be the latter because he hates sin, nor can he behold it with the least degree of allowance; and to suppose that a pure and holy being *creates* something which is displeasing in his own sight, is not only *improbable*, but *impossible*. To take the other horn of the dilemma and say he is *unable* to create a new heart as he creates all things else in heaven and on earth, viz. in a pure and perfect state, is still more absurd.

If it be true, as many pious and judicious divines in our own, as well as in other branches of the church innocently but firmly believe, that when the heart is created anew it is only a partial work—that sin in a latent or concealed form

still remains deep within, then several difficulties, and inconsistencies, if not absurdities are manifest

First. A pure, holy, and perfect God effects an impure, an unholy work, altogether unlike himself, or any thing which his divine hand hath made either in heaven or on earth.

Second. He must be displeased with the work of his own hand—as he cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance.

Third. God and man are reconciled when he adopts them into his family—when he gives them a new heart, they feel—they know they are reconciled to an offended God by the atoning blood of the Lamb. Therefore God must be reconciled to sin, or to the carnal mind, which is in its very nature enmity against God, and irreconcilable to his law.

Fourth. The new born child receives not its father's complexion—it bears not his image: thus a universal and salutary law established by God himself is nullified or strangely perverted.

Fifth. If the new born soul still retains a portion of the carnal mind, or sin in any shade or form, it could not be taken in that state, into heaven, nor could a merciful and good God send it to hell. Consequently the young convert bears no identity of character—the new birth only suspends him between heaven and hell as if he were worthy of neither.

As Almighty God cannot be the author of confusion or discord—as there can be no inconsistency nor incongruity in the work of his hand; and as whatever emanates from him must

bear the divine impress of harmony and perfection, we are constrained to believe that when God creates the heart anew, he lays the foundation of the christian's future glory. The important work of sanctification, as Mr. Wesley expresses it, is then begun; and by diligently watching unto prayer, his children may from that moment continue to grow and increase in knowledge and spiritual strength, until they reach the stature of young men and fathers in Israel.

Although Mr. Wesley has expressly said that sanctification is both instantaneous and gradual in its operation, yet many of us who profess to be his followers, have formed an idea that when the soul is sanctified throughout, it has reached a point of eminence from whence there is no advance; thus when we speak or think of that great work, we are apt to view it in its most extended and mature state. Could we keep the distinction in view which exists between a *child* and an *adult*, or the disparity existing between a *dime* and a *dollar*, we should be prepared to act and decide with greater discretion and effect both as it respects ourselves and others. Little children are more exposed to accidents, and more liable to defile their garments and to contract diseases than adults are. It would be very injudicious in a parent, or a guardian to affirm that the child was born with those blemishes or diseases, cleaving to its person. The true state of the case is this, the children were born in a perfect state, and were perfectly free from defilement or disease, but through carelessness or otherwise

they defiled their persons and contracted disease, or were wounded by some weapon, or vicious animal; yet those diseases, wounds and blemishes must be healed and washed away before they can be cordially received into respectable society. Thus it may be said of the young convert, those diseases, and wounds, and blemishes which are frequently seen, and painfully felt, have from some cause been contracted, yet must they be healed and cleansed by the balm of Gilead—the blood of the Lord Jesus applied through faith and fervent prayer. Young converts should be carefully taught to fly promptly to the great physician of souls the moment they feel a wound or a thrust from Satan, either of anger, or resentment, or of discontent, or pride—the poison should be immediately extracted—“If any man sin, we have an advocate with the father,” therefore let no child of God however young or weak rest one moment longer when the evil is seen or felt, until the remedy is applied. But when we are from our spiritual infancy taught to believe that those wounds and blemishes are natural—that they exist in all justified or converted persons for some time subsequent to their *new birth*—even until another and separate work, viz. entire sanctification is effected, after which they will feel or see them no more, it has a direct tendency to quiet their fears and lull them into a state of false security; and thus they rest contented, and bear with those evils, which they believe to be the common lot of all christians in a justified state. Thus an error in judgment or sentiment will naturally

lead to an error in practice, and according to their faith, so it is done unto them—hence in most cases the disease grows on and increases until there is little or no rational hope of their recovery. In corroboration of this fearful fact, we seldom find christians as earnestly engaged, with God in prayer and supplication after the lapse of months, and years, as they were a few days after their conversion.

“But may not this view of the subject lead young and inexperienced christians into error? May they not be induced to rest contented in an imperfect or defiled state, because they have been taught to believe that they were sanctified when they were converted?” By no means, as well might the individual say, “I was born without blemish—I was then in perfect health, therefore there is now no fear that I shall be deformed, or ever be called to weep over an impaired mind, or a diseased body!” And shall enlightened and purified christians say, “because I was born of God, bearing my heavenly Father’s moral image, (consequently without spot or blemish) I can therefore never more defile my garments, or wound and mar that soul which was created anew in a perfect and spotless state?” It is well known that children may contract diseases and stain their garments very soon after they are born; and in all such cases, the stains must be washed away, and the wounds healed, or shame and death must ensue. Therefore, no child of God should remain with a spot on his garments, or an ulcer on his soul for one hour; he should

go to Jesus. He should go and “do his *first* work.”—This was the advice given to the Ephesian church; they were not informed that they had been born in that deformed and ulcerated state—that those spots and blemishes were natural to all God’s children in their infancy; that there was another, a separate and distinct work to be effected, which would forever heal all those diseases, and cleanse their garments, and make them so perfectly white and clean, that they could never be stained again! No, this is not the language of the holy scriptures—they say, repent and do thy *first works*: return—go again to the great physician and he will *heal* all your *backslidings* and love you freely.

CHAPTER V.

FURTHER EVIDENCE IN FAVOUR OF THE PRECEDING VIEWS OF SANCTIFICATION TAKEN FROM THE STANDARD WRITERS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Although the view we have taken of this subject does not *perfectly harmonize* with the general sentiments of Mr. Wesley, yet if the candid and impartial reader will turn to pages 17—24, he will find the same views and opinion fully established by that great man of God. So that should there be any disparity between the doctrine of our church, as taught by Mr. Wesley on this subject, and our sentiments, the discrepancy cannot be imputed to us. Indeed, the rational and scriptural sentiments which we have ex-

pressed, are confirmed by nearly all our standard writers.

That judicious commentator, Joseph Benson, remarks in his comment on John iii, 3—"when born into this world we are capable of receiving, tasting, and being nourished by the food provided for us; so, when born of God, we begin to have an appetite for, and to partake of, first, the sincere uncorrupted milk of the word, adapted to the taste of babes in Christ; and then of stronger meat, suited to those of riper age. Hence follows a growth in spiritual health and strength, knowledge, experience and holiness, till growing up into Christ in all things, we arrive at the measure of the stature of his fullness." And on verses 6 and 7—"That which is born of the flesh is flesh"—he says, "only flesh, void of spirit: or is carnal and corrupt, and therefore at enmity with the spirit. And that which is born of the spirit is spirit—is *spiritual, heavenly, divine*, like its author. As if our Lord had said to Nicodemus, were it possible for a man to be born again in a literal sense, by entering a second time into his mother's womb, such a second birth would do no more to qualify him for the kingdom of God than the first, for what proceeds, and is produced from parents that are sinful and corrupt, is sinful and corrupt as they are; but that which is born of the spirit, is formed to a resemblance of that blessed spirit, whose office is to communicate a divine nature to the soul, and stamp it with a divine image."

Language could not well be framed to convey more forcibly and fully the sentiments we advo-

cate, than Mr. Benson has expressed in the above quotation.

We will select a few passages from the works of that holy man of God, J. Fletcher, expressive of the same sentiments. His cogent and irresistible arguments are designed to convince his opponents of the fallacy of the doctrine that sin, in the form of inbred corruption, must necessarily remain in the christian's heart, while he remains in this sinful world, but they as conclusively prove the impracticability of sin remaining in the heart which God has *created anew* in Christ Jesus.

"Now, if God dwelt in Paul by his living spirit, it becomes our objectors, to shew that an *indwelling* God and *indwelling sin* are one and the same thing; or that the apostle had strangely altered his doctrine when he asked with indignation, 'what concord hath Christ with Belial?' For if *indwelling sin*, (the Belial within) was necessarily to nestle with Christ in Paul's heart, and in the hearts of all believers, should not the apostle have rather cried out with admiration, 'see how great is the concord between Christ and Belial! they are inseparable? They always live in the same heart together, and nothing ever parts them, but what parts man and wife, that is death!'—Last Check, sec. viii.

Again, Mr. Fletcher, in answer to the sixth argument of his opponent's remarks—("*indwelling* anger keeps us angry and not meek;) *indwelling* pride, keeps us proud and not humble. The stream answers to the fountain. 'It is absurd to suppose that a salt spring will send forth fresh water!'

The same excellent author is still more conclusive in the same Check, sec. xii, he observes—“when God completely gives the heart of flesh, does he not completely take away the heart of stone? Is not the heart of stone the very rock in which the serpent, *indwelling sin lurks*? And will God take away that *cursed rock*, and spare the **VENOMOUS VIPER** that breeds in its clefts?” And may we not ask with equal propriety and point, will God take away the old heart which was a nest filled with vipers, and give a new heart with only a *few serpents* crawling therein? Reason’s voice proclaims a loud and conclusive negative to such a supposition.

In Mr. Fletcher’s address to prejudiced imperfectionists, he makes the following pointed and severe remarks: “*indwelling sin* is not only the sting of death, but the *hell of hells*, if I may use the expression, for a sinful saint in a local hell, would dwell in a holy, loving God; and of consequence in a spiritual heaven; like Shadrach in Nebuchadnezzar’s fiery furnance, he might have devouring flames curling about him; but within him, he would still have the flame of divine love, and the joy of a good conscience. But so much of *indwelling sin* as we carry about us, so much *indwelling hell*; so much of the sting which pursues the damned; so much of the spiritual fire which will burn up the wicked; so much of the never dying worm which will pray upon them; so much of the dreadful instrument which will rack them; so much of Satan’s image which will frighten them; so much of the characteristic by

which the devil's children will be distinguished from the children of God; so much of the black mark, whereby the goats will be separated from the sheep. To plead therefore for the continuance of *indwelling sin*, is no better than to plead for keeping in your hearts one of the sharpest stings of death, and one of the *hottest coals of hell fire*."

And yet agreeably to the generally received opinion in our church, this "*hottest coal of hell fire*" remains in the heart after God creates it anew in his own image!! If such be the fact, then may we cry out in the impressive plaintive language of Israel's king—"tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon,—lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

We have already adverted to the testimony of Dr. Adam Clark, see pages 18, 19. It may not, however, be improper to add another remark from that learned and experienced divine.—Theology, p. 203. "Increase in the image and favor of God. Every grace and divine influence which ye have received is a seed, a heavenly seed, which, if it be watered with the dew of heaven from above, will endlessly increase and multiply itself. He who continues to believe, love and obey, will grow in grace, and continually increase in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, as his sacrifice, sanctifier, counsellor, preserver, and final Saviour. *The life of a christian is a growth*: he is at first born of God, and *is a little child*: becomes a young man and father in Christ. Every father was once an infant; and had he not grown he would never have been a man. Those

who content themselves with the grace they received when converted to God, are at best, in a continual state of *infancy*; but we find in the order of nature, that the infant that does not grow, and grow daily too, is sickly, and soon dies: so in the order of grace, those who do not grow up into Jesus Christ are sickly, and will soon die—die to all sense and influence of heavenly things. There are many who boast of the grace of their conversion; persons who were never more than babes, and have long since lost even that grace, because they did not grow in it. Let him that readeth understand.”

How plain—how rational and consistent are those sentiments, and how perfectly do they accord with our views on the important subject of sanctification.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE.

“However rational and consistent with the sentiments of these great men which you have adduced, and however plausible this theory may be, is it not certain that *experience*—nay, the *experience* of every young convert, proves conclusively that when the work of regeneration is effected—when God creates the heart anew in Christ Jesus, there still remains a portion of the carnal mind within?”

We reply,—when that great change is effected, when God takes away the heart of stone, and

gives the heart of flesh—when he gives the evidence that this work of regeneration has been performed—the moment after they pass from death unto life, they uniformly feel the spirit of adoption whereby they can cry Abba Father—the spirit of bondage and fear is removed, and they receive a full assurance of their acceptance in the beloved—they feel—they know that if God were then to call them to eternity, they would be received into everlasting habitations, where they could not appear in an unclean or a defiled state.

This fact which will be confirmed by all genuine converts, goes far, if not conclusively, to prove that when God creates the heart anew, he leaves no part of it unrenewed, consequently no part or portion of the carnal mind can remain in the heart at that interesting moment.

If, therefore, all young converts feel a gracious assurance of the divine favor, and feel no fear even then to appear in the presence of a holy God, and they are not at that time free from all sinful blemishes, then are they deceived in their experience; and to suppose that all new born souls or young converts are involved in a delusion, is at least an uncomfortable doctrine; nor does it render their condition more comfortable or remove the difficulty from the character of Deity, to say he hides those inward stains from their eyes at that moment, but reveals them as they are able to bear the sight !

The great change which takes place at the moment of conversion, only effects directly the features of the soul. When man fell by trans-

gression, his physical powers and bodily senses were not materially changed or affected, only as they become subject to decay and death. So in the new birth, when the heart is created anew in Christ Jesus, it receives the moral image of its heavenly Father, i. e. *purity* and *love*.

As in the fall, so in regeneration, our bodily senses remain the same. It was through the influence of those senses particularly *sight* and *taste*, that the tempter overcame our first parents. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat." Gen. iii, 6.

God has required, and will in all ages require, of his creature man, the undivided affection of his heart. He is a jealous God. As the eyes of our first parents wandered from their Creator, and their taste desired extended gratification, which brought ruin on themselves and all their guilty race; even so after the work of regeneration is effected, our bodily senses remain as they were, and are liable to wander from that divine Being who must be the object of our supreme delight.

In his primeval state of innocence and purity, man was only debarred from one tree, which was placed in the midst of Eden as a test of his obedience to, and affection for his Creator. But under the reign of grace, of Christ's redeeming love, the forbidden fruit has been placed all along the

path of life—Christ's supreme command is *Love*; hence the apostle says—"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." 1 John ii, 15, 16, 17.

Our bodily senses therefore, will ever be liable to lead us into error, in loving the creature more than the Creator. God's word and spirit call on us to deny ourselves, (particularly the desire of the eye, and of the flesh, and the pride of life,) and take up our cross and follow the Lord Jesus. Thus a conflict must of necessity, be produced between the flesh and the spirit. The word of God expressly says—"For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit lusteth against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." Gal. v, 17. This fact has lead many pious divines to believe that there are two separate and distinct natures existing in the heart of all God's children through life; which is not strictly correct. Those bodily senses which were given to man in his state of innocence, are still necessary, as pleasing and important links which connect the soul and body together; and when they are regulated by the voice of reason and the word of God, and are brought under the influence of *grace* and *faith*, they are calculated to conduce to man's happiness, and the glory of God.

To the *faithful* believer in Jesus Christ, those senses, and also the enemy who takes advantage of man's weakness through their influence, will continue like the house of Saul, to grow weaker and weaker, while the inner man being the moral image of God, like David, will grow stronger and stronger. Hence the apostle exhorts christians to "*fight the good fight of faith.*" 1 Tim. vi, 12. Again it is said, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John v, 4.

Another inspired writer is very express on this subject, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." 1 Peter ii, 11.

It is by indulgence in lawful things generally, that the believer is led into error and evil. The devil taking advantage of his infirmities, urges him on by false reasoning, to yeld to the solicitations of his appetites and passions. This artful deceiver will suggest, that as God has given him those propensities, and their gratification adds to his comfort, they may be innocently indulged; but as he yields to those temptations, and the desire of his senses, God's holy spirit is grieved, Satan is gratified and the believer's faith is weakened. In this state the roots of bitterness begin to spring up—pride, self-will, discontent, &c. Thus we may perceive the source, or opening germ of inbred sin, without having it interwoven with our spiritual existence when the heart was created anew.

The above, we presume, is a partial, yet correct view of what is generally termed the exis-

tence of inbred sin. The reader is respectfully requested to refer to the third part of this little volume for instruction respecting those evils.

“But does not universal *experience* prove that there still remains the seed of sin—roots of bitterness in the *hearts* of all young converts. Do they not feel self-will, pride, discontent, and doubts, arising within?”

And does not *universal experience* prove that there are good desires—sympathetic affections, &c. to be found more or less in every sinner’s heart? and yet God himself declares that the sinner’s heart is *altogether corrupt*—the very thoughts and imaginations of the heart are only evil, and that continually; from such a soul nothing good can possibly emanate—no, not one good desire. From what source do those good emotions in the sinner’s heart proceed? Unquestionably they all spring from the Lord Jesus Christ, the only source of good of any kind. He however is not in that corrupt heart—no; Satan dwells and reigns there. Christ says—“*behold I stand at the door*” (of the sinner’s heart) “and knock.” If therefore the Lord Jesus from without, through the agency of the Holy Spirit impresses good emotions on the heart and conscience of corrupt sinners, why may not Satan, an evil corrupt spirit, after he has been expelled by the power of God from the heart, make an effort to return—why may he not make desperate assaults from without, which may be as sensibly felt by a pure and holy child of God, as those impressions of good can be felt which are made on the sinner’s heart by the Holy Spirit? Such a supposition is reasonable, and

scriptural, and will be confirmed by the experience of every genuine christian. Ask that individual who professes to have experienced the blessing of entire sanctification in an instant, at some period subsequent to his conversion, if he never feels any emotion of evil—no discontent, uneasiness, resentment, self-will, or self-desire, &c. He will answer in the affirmative, and perhaps add that he has lost the evidence of his sanctification, or that those evil emotions which he is now subject to feel occasionally, are temptations of the devil—they are from without, they do not proceed from his heart.

And why, we respectfully ask, may not the same devil tempt young and experienced converts in the same way? Surely he may, and does, and too often by their ignorance of his power and his character, they give way supposing that those bitter weeds were not plucked up when God created their hearts anew in righteousness and true holiness. Hence they are permitted imperceptibly and ignorantly to *spring up*, and grow, and darken, and disgrace again that soul which was created in God's own image. The apostle to the Gentiles informs us that our great High Priest was *tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin*. If Christ was tempted in all points as we are, he must have felt the same assaults which his followers feel, yet was there no inbred corruption in his pure and holy soul.

There are, however, many pious, holy, intelligent christians who profess to have experienced the blessing of sanctification, subsequently to their

conversion. They say it was a distinct work from that of regeneration—that it was effected *instantaneously*, and from that moment, they felt no more of the effects of inbred sin—no emotion of evil—their peace and love were no more disturbed by any of those evils. The perfect love of God continued to flow through their souls in noiseless, peaceful rivulets. In the days of primitive methodism, the witnesses in favour of this important work being performed in this way, were both numerous and respectable.

Respecting the testimony of those distinguished characters, (whose memory we love and venerate,) it may be presumed, without casting the slightest shade of obloquy upon their christian character, that they may in a degree, have departed from their "*first love*"—they may have contracted some slight blemishes after their conversion. The glorious shining sun which burst with resplendent lustre upon their souls on the morning of their new birth, may have become partially beclouded by unbelief—the scorching sun of temptation may have caused the growth of divine grace in their hearts to droop or wither more or less. Even that holy man of God, J. Fletcher, lost the evidence of his sanctification twice or thrice. Under such circumstances, a large portion of grace and love suddenly communicated and poured out upon the inner man, would have a tendency not only to revive their drooping souls, but to strengthen their hearts exceedingly, and thereby prepare them in future to resist and overcome all their spiritual enemies with perfect

ease. A sudden and powerful manifestation of grace imparted after the assaults of their enemies might very naturally and innocently be by them considered the *instantaneous* work of sanctification.

This supposition is both rational and plausible, and will be strengthened and illustrated by adverting to the state of a farmer's corn-field under the influence of a distressing drought; the young corn withers and assumes a sickly appearance, but a large and reviving shower of rain re-invigorates and changes the appearance of the corn almost instantaneously; yet it is only restored to the state of health and beauty which it possessed before the dry season commenced.—From the time the rain fell it took a fresh and vigorous start, and was never again arrested in its growth until the grain was perfectly matured.

Another, and perhaps a more cogent reason might be assigned; and to show how far the *prejudice of education*, and *respect for the opinion of others*, may influence our feelings and judgment, we will take the liberty to relate our own *experience*.

When the Lord mercifully converted our soul, at that moment he not only removed our condemnation, but every doubt and fear was taken away—we felt an unbounded confidence in God, our Saviour. Nothing could have shaken this confidence—the spirit of God bore witness with our spirit, that we had passed from death unto life—that we were then a child of God by regeneration and adoption. A few weeks after

this memorable change had taken place we experienced a very gracious display of God's overpowering grace—this baptism of the Holy Spirit we then believed to be the second blessing—the *instantaneous* work of sanctification—we spoke of it as such in love feasts frequently, and in the integrity of our heart, we spoke just what we believed to be the plain truth.

But in preaching to others—in enforcing the doctrine of our church, viz: holiness of heart—that ye must be sanctified wholly, or ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, that this work is separate and distinct from regeneration, and to be received by faith, subsequently to your conversion; we found a difficulty in our own *experience*.

If it be true that when the soul is born again, it remains to a certain extent defiled by inward sin, we were fearfully deceived at the moment of our conversion. We felt prepared and willing to meet the Judge of all the earth, the moment our heart was changed—the moment our heart was created anew in Christ Jesus; but, if another separate and distinct work was necessary as a prerequisite to an entrance into heaven, then were we deceived in our own experience, which we could not disbelieve, the evidence was too strong and conclusive.

This difficulty presented a knot which we could not untie. *Reason* and *experience*, and the *testimony* of God's Holy Spirit, were all opposed to sentiments and opinions which we had previously formed, and which we believed as firmly to be true, as we believed the truth of God's

word. We felt an assurance then, and still believe firmly, that had we then been taken from earth away, we would have been received into everlasting habitations—we should have rested forever in Abraham's bosom. On inquiry we find that our own *experience* corresponds in the above particulars, with the *experience* of nearly all of God's children. Therefore, *experience* confirms the theory we have advanced on the subject of *sanctification*.

CHAPTER VII.

SCRIPTURE EVIDENCE.

IT is not, however, the force of *reason*, nor the *testimony of learned and pious divines*, aided by the powerful *influence of experience* that can establish this or any other point of doctrine; it must stand if it stands firmly, on an immutable foundation. We will therefore proceed now to examine *God's word*—the Holy Scriptures, which are the only unerring rule both for our faith and practice.

The most conclusive text in the Bible, and the passage which is relied on more than any other to prove that the soul is *born again* or *regenerated*, in a defiled state, or with traits of inbred sin attached to its new nature, is recorded 1 Cor. iii, 1, 3, "and I brethren could not speak, unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with

milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

The apostle does not here intimate that those whom he terms *babes in Christ*, were born in a carnal or defiled condition; much less does he teach us to believe that all God's children are born in an unclean state altogether unlike their Father. It is true he calls them *babes in Christ*, and with the same breath pronounces them carnal. They had been born again and adopted into God's family on earth; the character thus imparted to them they must retain forever; should they contract the fatal disease of sin, which, if not healed, must inevitably terminate in death eternal, yet were they the children of God by regeneration, and should they eventually die in sin and sink into hell, their identity of character would be known there through eternity, and only tend to make their punishment and disgrace the more intolerable. Hence Peter says of apostates—"The latter end is worse with them than the beginning." 2 Pet. ii, 20. They were therefore still *babes in Christ*—and they were still *carnal*. They had not grown and strengthened in proportion to their age. They were like *babes—weak in faith*—withered and diminutive, of course *carnal* to a certain extent, when they should have been strong in the Lord. In this feeble state of mind, they had given way to prejudice and partiality, each one selecting and giving a preference to his favourite minister; this

error led to discord, envy, strife, and divisions—when they should all have been of one heart and of one mind, and all one in Christ Jesus their Lord. There is nothing in this text when rationally understood which proves that all or any of God's children are born in an *unholy* or imperfect state.

The same apostle again addresses his Corinthian brethren in the following affectionate language. "*Having, therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* 2 Cor. vii, 1. From the phraseology of this passage, some pious and learned divines have supposed that the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty to whom it is addressed, were born with those dark stains cleaving to their souls; but such an inference cannot be rationally drawn from the text. The evil against which they are cautioned, or with which they are plainly charged, is an improper connection with unbelievers—with infidels—the holy seed had commingled with the impure and the unholy. When the apostle emphatically asks, ch. vi, 14, 15, 16. "*What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* Might not those brethren who had been born again and adopted into God's family on earth, with those filthy stains cleaving to their inmost souls, say with great propriety—"We cannot separate ourselves ourselves from those filthy blemishes, because the holy spirit

hath not yeth cleansed the temple which God created in our hearts with stains of moral defilement remaining on the *inner walls*; neither hath he who has all power in heaven and on earth, turned the strong man armed out of our hearts—he, Satan, is still in the citadel, though a prisoner; therefore, if the Lord Jesus dwells in our hearts, he must be associated with Belial. The Lord Almighty must dwell and walk in the defiled defective temple of our hearts until he finishes the work which he began when he created our souls, (not altogether, but partially) anew in Christ Jesus. This plain rational view of the text unequivocally proves that when the heart is renewed in the image of God, it is created in a pure and holy state.

“But does not St. Paul in addressing his Hebrew brethren, (and no doubt they were the children of God,) say ‘*let us go on to perfection*?’ does not this exhortation prove that all young converts are not *perfect*—are still defiled with inbred sin?”

This text rationally understood, cannot possibly convey such an idea. A child is born into the world, it is pronounced a *perfect child*—the infant is defective in no part; but must it therefore remain in that state? No, it must “*go on*” from an *infantile* to a *mature perfection*, even the full grown stature of a man. It should *grow* and *expand*, and unfold all the embryo beauties and excellencies which the great Creator implanted in its nature when it was born. Neither should the child of God remain only a “*babe in Christ*,” but should “*go on*” until it reaches the size and

strength of a man. Literally and critically speaking, the child is *perfect*, and yet it *goes on* daily "*to perfection*." So should—so must it be with those who are born of God. If they do not advance they must recede ; if they do not *grow* they will *wither*. There is no stationary point during our probationary state. Therefore, those who have remained for months and years in a justified state, neither stronger in faith, nor warmer in love than when God spoke peace to their souls, are in imminent danger. To all such we would say, "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ will give thee light. Tarry not in all the plains ; but escape for thy life to the mountain of God's redeeming, purifying love.

It is however expressly said, "*that the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh ; and these are contrary the one to the other ; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*" Gal. v, 1—17. On this text, Dr. A. Clarke makes the following judicious remarks, "God still continues to strive with you, notwithstanding your *apostacy* ; showing you whence you have *fallen*, and exciting you to *return to him* ; but your own obstinacy renders all ineffectual ; and through the influence of those different principles, you are kept in a state of self opposition, and self distraction ; so that *ye cannot do the things that ye would* ; you are convinced of what is right and wish to do it ; but having *abandoned the gospel*, and the grace of Christ ; the laws and the ordinances which ye have chosen in their place, afford you no power to conquer your evil propensities." This learned commentator under-

stood the principles of sound logic too well to intimate that those christians had been born with those opposite principles attached to their new and heavenly nature—or that there could be an amalgamation of virtue and vice—of good and evil—honesty and dishonesty mixed up in the same heart, or that Christ and Belial had become associates together. In their sinful and unrenewed state the conflict was carried on between the powers of darkness, or the devil within the sinful heart, and the power of grace striving with the sinner's rational powers from without—“*Behold I stand at the door and knock.*” After the victory of God's holy spirit, and the heart was changed by divine grace, the conflicting parties changed positions—Christ, or grace within, and Belial without. The one represented by the spirit and the other by the flesh. Hence the perpetual conflict between those opposite parties, which will, in all probability, be carried on until our probationary state shall end; or, until the spirit of God having become greatly *grieved*, takes its everlasting flight, and gives up the sinner to the power and influence of Satan.

Again, Paul in writing to the Thessalonians, says,—“And the very God of peace *sanctify you wholly*; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thes. v, 23.

There is nothing in this passage which intimates that those Thessalonians had been born in an unholy state—no sentiment expressed which may not be rationally and righteously explained on the

above theory. Nor is there any other passage in the Bible, either the Old or New Testament, which expressly or by fair implication, proves that a new born soul is not clean, bearing the image of the divine author of its spiritual existence.

Not so respecting the theory we have advanced, it is taught and confirmed throughout the Bible.

When Nicodemus came to our Saviour to receive instruction from his own gracious lips, respecting the plan of salvation, it is not reasonable to suppose that the Lord Jesus would have been so explicit on the subject of the *new birth*, as to mention it several times, accompanied with the solemn formality of *verily*, *verily*, added to his declaration, and yet say nothing about another and a greater work, viz : *sanctification*, if indeed it is a *separate* and *distinct* work from regeneration or the new birth, to be performed at a subsequent period.

The Lord Jesus Christ in all his parables and illustrations designed to simplify and make plain his own everlasting gospel, teaches the doctrine of a gradual, constant, vigorous growth in grace *after* the great work of regeneration is effected; but no where intimates, that one born of God—born from above, must still remain in a defiled state until another and a greater work is performed, by which the soul is cleansed from every stain and pollution. The parable of the mustard seed—of the sower—of the tares—of the leaven—of the talents, all convey the same idea, and establish the same doctrine. The plant is perfect at its first appearance, and continues to grow and expand daily.

John speaks of the new birth in plain and elevated terms—he says,—“*he that is BORN of God SINNETH NOT.*” Now, if a portion of the carnal mind, remains in the heart of all those who are only *converted*, or *born again*, John should have added, and *sanctified*; but as this is omitted, we are bound to believe that God creates the heart anew in a pure and undefiled state, which may be preserved unblemished through life, or it may become defiled—ulcerated, and die eternally. Respecting the privilege of one born again, John says, “he that is born of God keepeth himself and the wicked one toucheth him not.” 1 John v, 18. This is his high and holy privilege; but John does not intimate that this wise and salutary course is always pursued.

Peter says—“Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings—as *new born babes*, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” 1 Peter ii, 1, 2. Nothing could be more plain or explicit, and nothing could more beautifully and perfectly confirm our sentiments.

To refer to every passage of holy writ explanatory and confirmatory of this rational doctrine, would be to transcribe a large part of the New Testament.

We will only advert to one more passage which will be sufficient with what has been already quoted and advanced, to convince every candid unprejudiced mind, others would not be convinced was an angel from heaven to confirm these truths verbally and unequivocally in their

presence. In the apocalypse the church of Ephesus is addressed in the following affectionate and instructive manner. "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not; and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast *left thy first love*. Remember therefore from whence thou art **FALLEN**, and repent, and *do thy FIRST WORKS*; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Rev. ii, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Observe, it is not intimated that they were born in that diseased state—they had backslidden, they had left their *first love*; yet were they not called children of the devil. Their heavenly Father bore with them. The inspired writer does not inform them that they were born in a diseased or a defiled state—he does not say "ye should not be surprised at the sin which still remains in your hearts, which a merciful and good God concealed from your eyes when you passed from death unto life. Your inbred corruptions have never been destroyed—those roots of bitterness have never been plucked up—God, your heavenly Father, did not make you in his own image, when he created your hearts anew in righteousness and true holiness—you must therefore seek for another separate and distinct work of grace, to be performed on your hearts, and when that is per-

formed, you will feel no more of those evil sensations again—you will then be raised above the reach of *evil emotions*.” No, such is not the language of reason, nor of revelation.

This delinquent church is rationally and impressively reminded of her early privileges and the eminence she once occupied, and affectionately exhorted to repent and do her “**FIRST WORKS.**” This may have been the state of the Corinthians to whom Paul could not speak as unto spiritual, but as *carnal*; and the condition of those whom he exhorted affectionately to “cleanse themselves from all *filthiness of the flesh and spirit*.”

And this may be the condition of hundreds, nay, thousands in the church at this time.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

As far as our observations extend, there exist within the pale of our own church, two common errors.

First.—Generally we attach too little importance to the work of *regeneration*. Conversion, or the *new birth*, is an event of such frequent occurrence, that we are apt to speak and think of it with too much indifference. “At our protracted meetings there were so many converts;” but little more is thought of, or said about them. We do not, generally speaking, expect in these days to see the “*new creature*,” such in reality; it is not expected that either their appearance,

or their spirit, or their general deportment in life, shall be in *reality changed* as well as their souls. They have been converted and added to the church; hence, they sing to themselves a requiem of ease, and too frequently sink into the Laodicean state, where they wait patiently for the next revival or protracted meeting, to have their souls refreshed and comforted again. It is greatly to be feared that not only professors are in the habit of placing too little value on the pearl of great price—the *new heart*, but even sinners are led to view it as something of little importance, seeing that it produces very little change in the *life*, and *practice*, and *appearance*, of those who profess to obtain the blessing.

Secondly.—The second error is, we have been led to view the subject of *sanctification* in a magnifying glass. It is looked upon as something too sacred—too high and holy for ordinary christians to expect; or if at all, not before the dying hour. Hence we hear it frequently said—“such an individual is very pious—she is seeking, or she professes to enjoy the blessing of sanctification.” This at once, in the estimation of many, elevates her character above the general grade of christians, and in their estimation disqualifies her for the ordinary pursuits of life, or the society of frail mortals in this sin disordered world. The standard of *sanctification* has been raised so high, that even our innocent infirmities, are looked on as sinful and condemnatory in their character; hence, those who make an open profession, or confidently declare that they enjoy this blessing,

are eyed with suspicion or jealousy ; consequently that heavenly union, and mutual confidence so necessary to the peace and happiness of God's children, is often interrupted, if not destroyed. Whereas a correct view of this subject would have a tendency to correct the above evils and errors. Were we to place the first dawn of sanctification where Mr. Wesley places it, i. e. at the moment of our conversion to God—were we to view this as the commencement of the great work, and then continue carefully and diligently to grow in grace every day and every hour—to feed the new born soul with the sincere milk of the word ; then by watching unto prayer every moment, we should soon and safely grow up into Christ, our living head. Young converts should dread the slightest touch of sin, or the most distant approach of evil more than death. Were they to continue *instant* in prayer, trusting confidently in the grace and merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, and follow the example of the primitive christians, and our forefathers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, by fasting two days in each week, more or less, as their health could bear it, then should they grow up as plants of our heavenly Father's right hand planting, bearing abundantly in their season all the fruit of *christian perfection*. They would then bloom in perfect beauty, and ripen into fruitful maturity in the vineyard of the Lord on earth, until their blood bought souls should be transplanted to the paradise of God, to bloom in eternal glory, beyond the blighting frosts or withering draughts, or desolating storms of a sin disordered world.

A white and splendid robe is easily soiled; hence when a pure and holy God for Christ's sake, imparts the white mantle of love as a natural and graceful ornament for the *new heart*, we should guard its purity with untiring zeal. "He that is born of God *keepeth himself*, and the wicked one toucheth him not." Christians from their birth—the moment they put on Christ, should continue to hunger and thirst after righteousness; they should run and not weary; they should walk and not faint; they should mount up as on wings of eagles to their native heaven. If any of us have left our first love—if we feel one painful sensation of sin, or see one blemish on our white garments, we should fly promptly to the fountain opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness, nor ever rest one moment until the stain is washed away in Christ's most precious blood applied by faith. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Let him not remain one hour in sin when a remedy is accessible.

Our privileges are very great. The promises of the gospel are not only *great*, but they are very precious. Let us therefore claim them in humble confidence—in strong faith, and we shall be made every whit whole.

O God send thy light and thy truth into all the earth. May Zion speedily arise, and put on her beautiful garments and come up from the wilderness, leaning on the arm of her beloved—"looking forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Amen.

PART II.

ADDRESS TO OUR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS WHO DO NOT
BELIEVE THAT GOD'S CHILDREN CAN BE PERFECT
IN THIS EVIL WORLD.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

"See that ye fall not out by the way."—Gen. xlv. 24.

THIS salutary counsel is as applicable to christians in the nineteenth century as it was to Joseph's brethren. We are all strangers in a strange land—all travellers—and all children of the same merciful Father; therefore we should all strive together for the faith of the gospel in a spirit of meekness and affection.

The plan of salvation revealed in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, presents an ocean of unmingled mercy poured forth upon a guilty world, not with the voice of thunder and a stormy tempest bursting from the summit of a smoking Sinai, but in noiseless, boundless streams issuing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in floods of infinite and eternal compassion and love. When their mighty Maker—the eternal God, became man, the angels left their high abode, and flew with joyful haste to bear the news to our lower world—to the humble, watchful shepherd they disclosed the opening secret of redeeming love. *"Fear not"*—there is no cause for trembling now.

No sound of terror comes from heaven to-day We bring glad tidings of great joy to all your fallen race. *Pardon*, and *peace*, and holiness and heaven, are all in Jesus' name. 'Unto you a child is born; unto you a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.' "

The gospel of the Son of God is a system of rich and abundant privileges which all may freely claim, and richly enjoy. All the guilty sons of Adam may look and live, for our God is no respecter of persons. Although the rich men of the earth are almost excluded from the kingdom, yet even they need not despond, for the Lord Jesus declares that with God, *even their salvation is possible*.

Why should we therefore contend and fall out by the way, seeing we are all equally guilty—yes verily, guilty of our brother's blood; yet through his atoning merits, we all have an equal claim on mercy's boundless store. Our brother is not only governor of Egypt, but he is the rightful sovereign of heaven and earth. His promises are not only *great*, but they are very *precious*. "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what *ye will*, and it shall be done unto you." John xv, 7.

In view of such abundant blessings and privileges, shall we be more stupid and unwise than the blind sons of Belial? Respecting earthly things, they claim and eagerly contend for every

cent to which they are entitled by law. Should a friend bequeath to any one of them a legacy of a few thousand dollars, he would urge his claim to the last cent, even through the iron door of a legal process.

Shall our heavenly Father bequeath to us the rich legacy of a *pure heart*—*perfect love*—a spotless, glorious wedding garment, which cost the precious blood of the Son of God, and shall we refuse to receive the unspeakable gift at his hand? Surely such conduct argues folly in the extreme. Rather let us claim all the rich privileges of the gospel, firmly and promptly, knowing that He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, will, with him, freely give us all things,—this in particular—a *new, pure, clean heart*—yes,

“A heart in every thought renewed,
And full of love divine,
Perfect and right, and pure and good,
A copy Lord of thine.”

CHAPTER I.

HOLINESS OF HEART, OR A STATE OF ENTIRE
SANCTIFICATION, THE PECULIAR AND PRESENT
PRIVILEGE OF ALL GOD’S CHILDREN, CONFIRMED
BY THE VOICE OF REASON.

The voice of *reason* loudly and unequivocally declares that all God’s children should be *morally perfect*. If our salvation is of the Lord; if God himself is the author of our present spiritual life, then, it is not only *reasonable*, but absolutely *neces-*

sary, that christians should be *perfect*, even *now*.— Nothing has ever emanated from the hands of God in an imperfect state. In all the works of creation, there is not one blot, or one imperfect line to be discovered by the most scrutinizing mind. The human body is entirely *perfect*; nor is there an artist on earth who can suggest one rational improvement to this complicated piece of mechanism. The same may be said of every twig, and of every tree in the forest—of every pebble and of every mountain. The heavens and the earth, and all that are therein, are the works of an Almighty hand; they all declare his glory and bear his divine signature, namely, **PERFECTION**. Those stupendous works were framed and finished in six days; but the work of *redemption*, which was effected by the same divine hand, required a labor of thirty and three years.

Is it not altogether *reasonable* to suppose that the great work of *redemption* should bear the divine signature, when it is inscribed on every atom in creation?

If, however, we must remain imperfect during the term of our earthly existence, and still continue to bear the *deforming*, degrading mark of sin, the circumstance *must* proceed either from *choice* or *necessity* in the Author of our spiritual life. Either our divine Redeemer must be *unable*, or *unwilling* to effect a perfect work in and for his spiritual children. The supposition that he is *unwilling*, stamps his own attributes with *imperfection*! To say that he is *unable*, is still more *absurd*.

Some who are opposed to the doctrine of *christian perfection*, run into extremes which cannot be justified. It does not follow that to be a *perfect christian*, the individual must possess the *perfection of Deity*, any more than a *perfect child* must possess the strength and wisdom of a *man*. The child is as *perfect as its father*; it is every way *perfect as a child*—yet it grows daily, and it is still *perfect*. The same may be said of the young plant when it first appears above the ground; it is small and tender, but it is *perfect*; it must necessarily be so, because God made it, and the same power causes it to grow; therefore it *must be perfect* in its growth as well as in its *formation*.

It would be a source of inexpressible pain and mortification, were the virtuous parent's child placed under an irresistible restriction,—which would constrain her to indulge in vicious and corrupt habits. The character of the child must be pure and unsullied—must be elevated even above *suspicion*.

And must God's children continue to be stained with sin, that deadly evil which turned our first parents out of Eden, and filled the world with gloom and misery? After the price which has been paid for their redemption, and their restoration to spiritual health, must they still remain diseased and polluted with sin, while they remain in this world? If God is the christian's *Father*; if Jesus Christ is his *Redeemer*, and the Holy Ghost his *Sanctifier*; then is it a reproach of no ordinary magnitude cast upon the Author of our

salvation, to say he cannot be purified from all sinful stains and blemishes, *and sanctified wholly EVEN NOW*; for to-day is the day of salvation.

Was your particular friend, who is worth an income of one hundred thousand dollars per annum, and lives in a style corresponding with his dignity and wealth, to exhibit in his drawing room a *rough caricature* of his favorite child; were he to inform you that it was painted by our distinguished countryman, West, and that he gave one hundred thousand dollars for the portrait; would you not be astonished beyond expression? would you not doubt the truth of his declaration? Nay, you would be completely disgusted, and know not which to pity most, your friend's **IGNORANCE** and **EXTRAVAGANCE**, or *the skill and virtue of the artist*.

Apply the case. Jesus Christ is the author of our salvation—the redeemed of the Lord are to appear in a holy heaven. Their redemption cost not only one hundred thousand dollars, but a price infinite. “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus.” But agreeably to your opinions, the great Author of our salvation is dishonored; his ability is impugned, and his judgment and wisdom trampled under foot. He labored thirty and three years to effect the work of our redemption; and yet he was only able to produce a caricature! a deformed—*imperfect* child!! Esteemed objectors to *christian perfection*; the character of the author of our salvation,—the price paid for the soul's

redemption, and the place where it is to dwell forever, gives a high and holy, and incontrovertible negative to your sentiments. Nor does it make the case any better, but rather worse, to say—"the soul will be purified before it enters into heaven, somewhere, or somehow, when it reaches the confines of the grave." It would be an insult offered to the Holy One of Israel, and degrading to our own character to suppose, that the love of the world must be washed away, and the love of Christ lighted up in our hearts, when we can no longer enjoy earthly pleasure, and the withering blast of death has paralyzed every faculty of perception.

If the same divine Being who creates the infant in a *perfect state*, and yet daily, and by a *perfect process*, increases the size and strength of the child until it becomes a *perfect man*, is the author of our salvation, it should of necessity, be *perfect* both in its commencement and in its *progress*.

You acknowledge that what God does must be *perfect*—must necessarily bear his own signature; but man, you say, has also a part to act, and man is as naturally imperfect (since the fall) as his Creator and Redeemer is perfect; consequently man's part will always bear his own signature, which is *imperfection*. We readily admit that a deep gloom of ignorance and depravity shrouds the very existence of Adam's fallen race. But Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil—to dispel darkness from the mind of man, and to restore him again to the favor and *image of God*. Hence Paul says—"But of him are ye

in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us *wisdom* and *righteousness*, and *sanctification*, and *redemption*." 1 Cor. i. 30.

We do not presume to say that even the mature christian will ever attain to a state of perfect *knowledge*, or *wisdom*, or *power* in this life. It is the perfection of the *moral faculties*, and not of the intellectual or physical powers, for which we contend. The perfect christian may err in judgment; his memory may be very defective—his talents may be few and feeble, yet is he not considered guilty before God, and condemned for those infirmities. The gospel of Jesus Christ provides for poor, ignorant, impotent man's defects; he is not to be governed by the law given to Adam, but by the rule of *faith*. Abraham *believed* God, and it was accounted unto him for *righteousness*. Christ said to the afflicted female, "thy *faith* hath made thee whole." Again—"He that *believeth* shall be saved." And to shew the power and efficacy of *faith*, he says—"to him that *believeth*, all things are possible." Paul says—"we walk by *faith*; not by sight." Hence the perfect child of God lives by *faith*. Not only does he *believe* and trust in Jesus Christ as his atoning sacrifice; but he *believes*—he knows that apart from the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, he cannot think even one good thought; therefore he regulates *every word*, and *every act* of his life, by the simple rule of *faith*. By an eye of *faith* he views himself as always in the immediate presence of an invisible God. He says—he does nothing, which he would not do or say if the

Lord Jesus were personally present. Living and acting in this way, though surrounded by ignorance and infirmities, he believes that God his heavenly Father, will accept his services through the merit and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Perhaps your principal error proceeds from an injudicious arrangement of the plan of salvation. "Order is heaven's first law." Were you to enjoin the performance of a duty upon your infant child which none but a grown person could perform, it would not only be impracticable for the child to obey, but it would be cruel and unjust in you to make the requisition.

It will be readily admitted by every individual of intelligence, that a sinner, while he remains in his unrenewed state, cannot perform the duties required of those who have been born again—who have been raised from a death of sin, unto a life of righteousness in Christ Jesus the Lord; God does not require this at their hands. A sinner cannot *love his neighbor as himself*; neither can he love the Lord Jesus, because "*the carnal mind is enmity against God*;" but he can do what a just and holy God has required of him. He can repent and believe the Gospel; this all men every where are called to do; and through the assisting grace of God they are fully competent to the discharge of this duty; and when they take the first step, their heavenly father, in mercy hears their cry, helps their infirmities, and gives them a new heart, and infuses into them new life and vigor; then are they prepared to walk like Zachariah and Elizabeth, "*in all the command-*

ments and ordinances of the Lord BLAMELESS." Thus by a judicious course of obedience, the child of God grows and advances step by step, until he can say with Paul, "*through Christ strengthening me I can do ALL THINGS.*"

CHAPTER II.

HOLINESS OF HEART, OR A STATE OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION, THE PECULIAR AND PRESENT PRIVILEGE OF ALL GOD'S CHILDREN, CONFIRMED BY THE VOLUME OF REVELATION.

The voice of reason, however strong and conclusive its language may be, is not sufficient to establish this fundamental and important principle; if the word of God, rationally understood, does not support and confirm the doctrine of *christian perfection*, it must fall to the ground, however much it may tarnish the glory of our blessed Saviour in the great work of redemption. God's revealed word is certainly the only safe and infallible guide for the regulation of both our faith and practice; consequently by that divine standard this doctrine must stand or fall.

You believe that Paul positively and unequivocally refutes the doctrine of christian perfection, in his letter addressed to the Romans. To the law and to the testimony. He says—"for we know that the law is spiritual; but I AM CARNAL, SOLD UNDER SIN."—Rom. vii, 14. If this passage, and others of the same import, in this chapter, are to be considered as applicable to the apostle himself, *at the time he wrote them*, then

does he plainly contradict his own declarations. In the 8th chapter he says—“*For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh. God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,—and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.* THAT THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW MIGHT BE FULFILLED IN US WHO WALK NOT AFTER THE FLESH, BUT AFTER THE SPIRIT.”—viii, 2–4.

This distinguished apostle, apart from divine inspiration, possessed too much discernment to make contradictory statements. If indeed he spoke of himself—if HE WAS THEN CARNAL, SOLD UNDER SIN, it would be extremely imprudent in any individual to believe his words; as the stream cannot rise higher than the source from whence it flows; it necessarily follows that his sentiments *must be sinful and deceptive*. This plain and necessary inference must be drawn from your premises; and must conclusively prove that your view of this chapter, and the apostle's character, is incorrect.

This important letter is directed to the Romans; the first eleven chapters contain a conclusive argument to prove that God is no respecter to persons—that he saves all from the *guilt of sin*, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He addresses alternately the *Jews* and the Gentiles, who did in reality include the whole human family. In the 7th chapter, his address is made exclusively to the Jews, and designed to show them the impossibility of obtaining salvation by

the deeds of the law. The law knows no mercy—mercy and pardon can flow alone from Jesus-Christ to guilty mortals. The Jews had rejected Christ and would not have him to reign over them, therefore their condition was truly deplorable; consequently it required much wisdom and affection, as well as strength of argument, to convince them of their error. In his admirable and conclusive argument, the apostle uses the singular personal pronoun *I*, for the same purpose that James uses the plural pronoun *we*, when he says—"With the same mouth bless *we* God, and *curse we* men." The apostle himself could not curse any man. This mode of expression softened the declaration, and prevented irritation and prejudice, while it produced conviction on the minds of his hearers. The same apostle in another place observes—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom *I AM CHIEF*." Although St. Paul here speaks of himself in the present tense, yet no individual in his sober senses can for one moment suppose he meant that he was *THEN* the *chief of sinners*. Such an expression would pay a very poor compliment to the Gospel of Christ. By this declaration he magnified his office. After stating the object of Christ's mission into the world, he confirms the interesting truth, by living testimony. As though he had said—"look at *me*, mark *me* well; are you sinners of *desperate* character? *I* have exceeded you all in dark deeds of iniquity. *I now* stand before you as the "*chief of sinners*,"

saved by grace—a monument of God's amazing mercy." This is the apostle's plain meaning; nor could we have supposed that any *rational being* could possibly believe that Paul was the *chief of sinners* when he wrote his epistle to Timothy, had we not met with some pious persons who profess to believe that he was *carnal*, *sold under sin*, when he wrote his letter to the Romans.

You say, however, "it is impossible for any unregenerate person to delight in the law of God; and Paul expressly says—"*For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law in my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.*" Therefore you believe he must have meant himself—the experience, you are satisfied, must have been his own at the time he wrote the above paragraph.

It does not necessarily follow that this conclusion should be drawn from the apostle's premises. The *law* of God is *love*, and embraces all that is good, while it rejects and condemns all that is evil. Although man, in his fallen state, is dreadfully diseased and deeply defiled; yet, through the efficiency of the atonement made by Christ, even in his corrupt condition, the unregenerate man sees and admires that which is good; but he is so completely under the power and influence of his corrupt passions and depraved nature, that he is altogether unable to practise that which is good. Inform him that he is not so bad as many others; that he is really a good man, &c. and he will na-

turally be pleased and delighted. But charge him with dishonorable conduct—call him a hypocrite, or a liar, and although it may be literally true, and his character is in reality as black as midnight, yet he will be desperately insulted. He may therefore be said to delight in the *law of God*, i. e. *in honour and virtue, sentimentally*, or after the *inward man*. The grace of God has so far illuminated his mind, that he is enabled to see that vice is a monster of hideous mien; while there is something *delightful* in the very sound and appearance of virtue.

If, therefore, the most debased characters in our country *delight* in virtue and honour, sentimentally, is it surprising that an honest *penitent* who sincerely desires to flee from the wrath to come, should see a peculiar beauty in righteousness, and *delight in the law of God after the inward man*, although he is still unable to walk in the king's highway of *holiness*? His fallen, corrupt nature, sweeps him with resistless violence down the stream of vice and folly. An utter insufficiency of the arm of flesh will be felt by all who sincerely desire to fear God and work righteousness, until their hearts are changed and renewed in the divine image.

But the condition of an honest enlightened Jew, (to such, the argument in this chapter is addressed,) who utterly rejects the grace of God, offered through our Lord Jesus Christ, is deplorable beyond description: his feelings are finely described by the apostle in the 24th verse, when he exclaims, "*O wretched man that I am, who*

shall deliver me from the body of this death." Paul then gives the only rational answer which can be given to this important inquiry. "*I thank God through Jesus Christ.*" This name the Jew rejected, and there is salvation in no other.

The name and merits of Jesus Christ are sufficient; his blood can wash out *every stain* which sin has made. Hence the same apostle triumphantly says—"where sin abounded, GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND." But if sin must still remain in a degree in the heart of all christians while they remain in this world, then is Paul's statement incorrect, and Christ is robbed of his glory.

There is another text which you firmly believe proves conclusively that all mankind do and must sin while they remain in this world—"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John i, 8. If this passage is applicable to real christians—to all christians, while they remain in the world, then it is only necessary to compare the preceding verse with this, and it makes a *palpable contradiction*. "*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN.*"—verse 7th. To avoid this dilemma, you say, "the flesh sins, but the spirit does not." Neither reason, nor sound philosophy, nor God's word, will sustain such a distinction. The flesh, which is but matter, possesses no properties of action whatever—it is inert;—it is neither susceptible of sensation or intelligence. It is the property

of spirit alone to think or act ; consequently our material part is incapable of sinning against God. Were you to speak consistently and say, that the fallen, corrupt heart—the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, cannot exist without sinning, we will most freely subscribe to the sentiment. No man in existence can perfectly cease from sin until he is created anew in Christ Jesus, and receives the moral image of his heavenly Father enstamped upon his soul ; then can he triumphantly say with the apostle—“*He that is born of God doth not commit sin ;*” because his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, any more than an honest man can steal and retain his virtuous character.

May not this text be rationally, righteously, and satisfactorily understood, by supposing that it was addressed to those proud, self-righteous characters who denied that they were children of the devil, and earnestly contended that they were not *sinners*, or degraded like the Gentiles ;—they had Abraham for their Father—they were therefore, in their *own eyes*, *altogether righteous*, and required not the merits of the Lord Jesus. To all such characters, (and there have been such in all ages,) the language of this text is entirely applicable—“*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,*”—for the plain reason, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. This plain rational view of the passage removes every difficulty, and makes the apostle speak the language of consistency.

As the two passages which we have noticed, contain the strongest evidence which God’s

word affords in favour of your *unholy* doctrine, (pardon us—any thing that is not *holy*, must be *unholy*,) and we have proved that those texts, rationally understood, will not sustain the principles you advocate, we will now adduce a few passages, which directly and incontrovertibly prove that the doctrine of *christian perfection*, is the doctrine of the *Bible*.

“*Noah was a just man, and PERFECT in his generation, and Noah walked with God.*”—Gen. vi, 9. He was not a *perfect God*, no, nor even a *perfect angel*, neither was he a *perfect* subject of the Gospel dispensation; but he was *perfect* “*in his generation*,” i. e. as far as his light and privileges extended; God requires no more of any man.

Again, “*There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was PERFECT AND UPRIGHT, and one that feared God and eschewed evil.*”—Job i, 1. This honourable testimony respecting Job, was not given by an *imperfect* mortal, but by the living and true God. You say, however, that Job’s own testimony in reference to himself, is of a different character. Was it when he confidently exclaimed—“*As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty who hath vexed my soul; all the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit, God forbid that I should justify you: till I die, I will not remove my integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart*

shall not reproach me so long as I live."—Job xxvii, 2—6.

Whatever Job may have said respecting the *imperfection* of his own *knowledge* and *power*, does not affect the subject more or less; those defects, great as they were in him, as well as in every other human being, touch not his *moral character*. His soul was unsullied by sin's polluting stains. God's own testimony, *must not*, cannot be invalidated by man.

The pious Psalmist says—"Mark the PERFECT MAN, and behold the UPRIGHT, for the end of that man is peace." But you say that "even David frequently mourns over a *corrupt heart*, and bitterly complains not only of his infirmities, but of the indwelling sin which still remained in his heart. David, we admit, was not infallible; but like every other human being, he was liable to turn aside from the path of righteousness, which he did in *one instance*—he grossly offended God; he even committed adultery and murder; but does it follow that David's previous and subsequent life was also marked with sinful defilement? We have God's own word to prove the contrary—"Nevertheless, for David's sake, did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem; because *David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from the thing THAT HE COMMANDED HIM all the days of his life, SAVE ONLY IN THE MATTER OF URIAH, THE HITTITE.*"—1 Kings xv, 4, 5. David, no doubt, deplored that awful sin, and frequently wept

over his folly. But if Almighty God himself declares that he only turned aside from his commandments in the case of Uriah, surely it must argue a great degree of presumption in erring man to make him a constant delinquent. Let us hear David's *own experience* from his *own lips*. "*Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in MINE INTEGRITY: I have trusted also in the Lord: therefore I shall not slide. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart. For thy loving kindness is before mine eyes; and I have walked in thy truth.*" Psalm xxvi, 1—3. Again, "*I will wash mine hands in INNOCENCY; so will I compass thine altar, O Lord.*"—v. 6. Is this the language of one stained with *indwelling sin*?

This pious servant of God proceeds with his own experience—"Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according unto thy word. Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments. Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. Thou art good and doest good; teach me thy statutes. The proud have forged a lie against me, but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart. Their hearts are as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes. The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver." Ps. cxix, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72. Again—"O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou, through thy commandments hast made me wiser

than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. I have refrained my feet from every evil way that I might keep thy word. I have not departed from thy judgments; for thou hast taught me. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore, I hate every false way.”—v. 97—104.

It may be said, however, that as David was highly favored, even a man after God’s own heart, he was favored above mortals in general, that he was inspired by the Holy Ghost, and upheld by the right hand of God; we will, therefore, hear what he says of others. “They that trust in the Lord, shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth, even for ever.” And as though the pious Psalmist was determined to guard against the doctrine of the unconditional perseverance of *sinful saints*, he adds, “For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, *lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity*. Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts. As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; but peace shall be upon Israel.”—Ps. cxxv. David was not, therefore, a child of God, in whose heart indwelling sin found

an asylum ; neither did he advocate the existence of it in the hearts of others.

But we must appeal to higher authority than even the man after God's own heart. Our blessed Redeemer says—"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect." This injunction bears the impress of a divine command. Can we suppose that our Lord and Master would command his followers to occupy ground which was to them completely inaccessible? Our Saviour's standard is very high, "EVEN AS YOUR FATHER IS PERFECT." An inspired writer expresses the same sentiment in the following words—"And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, EVEN AS HE IS PURE."—1 John iii, 3.

Many other passages of God's word might be adduced in proof of this important doctrine ; but one plain text is as good as a thousand. The above, we think sufficient to satisfy every unprejudiced mind ; others would not be convinced either by *argument* or by *evidence*.

PART III.

PLAIN SERIOUS THOUGHTS ADDRESSED TO MEMBERS
AND MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, WHO
DO NOT ENJOY THE BLESSING OF PERFECT LOVE:
WHO ARE LIVING IN AN UNSANCTIFIED STATE.

"Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered."—*Jer. viii, 22.*

"*Is there not a cause.*"—1 Saml. xvii, 29.

CHAPTER I.

ADMONITORY REFLECTIONS.

You desire to be pure in heart—to love God with all your *heart, soul, mind, and strength*, or you do not; if you do not, then is your state truly deplorable; but if you do honestly desire above all things, to be cleansed from all unrighteousness—to be *sanctified wholly*; then is your case pleasingly hopeful—thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

Allow us respectfully and affectionately to ask if this is the true state of your mind, and the fervent, honest, sincere desire of your heart, why do you not already enjoy the blessing? You cannot believe that your heavenly Father is unwilling to impart it to you. If his own word did not refute such an idea, and peremptorily declare that *this is the will of God*, concerning you, *even your sancti-*

fication; yet his character and attributes loudly proclaim his willingness even now—*this very moment*, to effect this important work in your souls.

“GOD IS LOVE!”—*he is YOUR FATHER*. It is not reasonable, neither is it *possible* that Almighty God could impart a degree of goodness to his creatures which he does not himself possess.—*You are not only willing*, but you are ardently desirous that all your children should enjoy perfect health; even now your greatest earthly concern is, to see all your children prosperous and virtuous, not to-morrow, or at some future period—but *now*.

Neither can you possibly believe that you regard the health and happiness of your offspring with a greater degree of solicitude than a *merciful and good God* regards the welfare and honor of *his* children; this you cannot for one moment believe.

Perhaps, however, you may think it is *too soon* for you to expect such a distinguished blessing; then are you seeking it by *works*, and not by *faith*; and if so you never can, you never will find it, neither in time nor in eternity. Unless you seek it by *faith*, you never can attain thereunto, or be made a partaker of the divine nature. God is as *able*, and as willing to impart it to you now as he ever will be.

It may be, you think, that the privilege—the distinction is so great, it would argue a degree of *pride*, or at least *indelicacy*, to acknowledge that it is *now* in *your* possession.

You believe then that to be *perfectly humble*, would necessarily induce pride! can there be a greater absurdity? you labor under a fatal mistake if such are your sentiments. You believe, and know, that God has mercifully converted your soul, and adopted you into his family? and has made you *his child*, and an heir of heaven; and yet it would discover a want of *humility*, or of delicacy, to say that you *bear your Father's image*!

Here, however, we should be extremely cautious and jealous of our own hearts. Nothing can be more disgusting in the christian character than vanity or presumption, and while we avoid the smooth seductive eddy of indecision, and false delicacy, we must be every moment on our guard, lest we should be drawn into the whirlpool of pride; for all who are lured into that vortex, will be in danger of perishing eternally.

In pursuing our voyage to the heavenly land, we must be careful to keep our little bark in the channel, studiously avoiding the sunken rocks of feigned humility on one hand, or the foaming breakers of presumption on the other.

Dear brethren, do not suffer your enemies to deceive and lure you into eternal ruin by false reasoning—nor by terrifying alarms. If you are living without the *perfect love* of God shed abroad in your hearts, that love which casteth out all tormenting fear—if you are not pure in heart—not sanctified wholly, it is entirely your own fault. But if you are contented to live in your present state;—if you are not *wrestling with God in fer-*

vent prayer;—if you are not urging your case by *fasting* and supplication, then is your situation dangerous in the extreme. Your conduct loudly declares that you are satisfied, and willing to live in sin: or in other words you wish to enjoy the smiles of this present evil world—its comforts, pleasures and honors, while you live, and when you can live and enjoy those things no longer, then the Lord Jehovah shall have your **WHOLE HEART**—*then*, you will be perfectly willing to receive the cleansing operation of the **HOLY SPIRIT**; and thus evade the shame and pain of the cross of Christ, and ultimately, by climbing up some other way, gain an admission into the courts of heaven.

Do not, we beseech you, suffer yourselves to be deceived. God is not mocked; whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also reap. “If ye sow to the *flesh*, ye shall of the *flesh* reap *corruption*. But if ye sow to the spirit, ye shall of the spirit *reap life everlasting*.”

If you are not pressing forward, and urging your case at a throne of grace, by *prayer*, *supplication*, and *fasting*;—if you are not diligently watching against the encroachments of every intruder—such as *sloth*, *carelessness*, *pride*, *love of the world*, *ungodly companions*, &c; we greatly fear that you have no *well-grounded* hope or just reasons to expect that you will ever be cleansed from all unrighteousness, or ever enter into that rest which remaineth for the people of God. Unless you hunger and thirst after righteousness, you cannot be filled—unless your fervent, ardent,

unceasing desire, and determination is to be like the Lord Jesus, and possess *his image now*, you can never enjoy that privilege, consequently you can never enter into heaven. But if you *ardently desire* to be *like God*—to possess the spirit of Christ, and to bear perfectly the moral image of your heavenly Father;—and if you are *diligently* and *faithfully*, and *perseveringly*, seeking for this blessing, and utterly refuse to receive ease or comfort from earthly objects of any kind, until you secure this divine treasure; *then*, be encouraged, lift up your heads, your redemption draweth nigh. “*The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force.*” Math. xi, 12.

“Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates.” 2 Cor. xi ii, 5. Are you doing every thing in your power to secure the constant smiles of heaven, and the glorious image of God enstamped on your souls? Are you devout and serious,—not gloomy nor dejected—not sour, nor austere; constantly avoiding all levity of spirit, and all frivolity in your conduct, and all carelessness and indifference in your deportment towards others, or your God? Do you devote as much time as your temporal concerns will justify, to *prayer* and searching the holy scripture? Do you carefully avoid the society of wicked, and ungodly people, except when business or necessity compels you to visit them? In a word, are you more anxiously concerned, and

diligently engaged to secure this great treasure, than you are to gain the perishing, but necessary things pertaining to this world?

If you seek, in a proper manner, you must, you will find—for the mouth of the Lord hath declared, *it shall be so.*

It is, however, our decided opinion, formed after mature deliberation, considerable experience, and close observation,—that there is no situation on earth so awfully dangerous, as that in which those are placed who have experienced the converting grace of God—who still make a profession of religion, but are living in an unholy—and unsanctified state, and are not making zealous, ardent, honest efforts to secure the entire image of God.

Therefore, it is a rational and necessary conclusion that those who have long professed to enjoy religion, without an entire preparation to meet God—or without being *sanctified wholly*, give conclusive evidence to God, to the church, and to their own hearts, that they do not really and truly *desire* to possess this inestimable blessing.

To remain in an unholy—and unsanctified state is not only offensive, but insulting to God, and will prove ruinous to our own souls. Therefore, we hope that all such characters will suffer a plain word of exhortation, while we endeavor to point out some of the offensive and degrading consequences of living in such a state.

CHAPTER II.

THE DANGEROUS EFFECTS OF LIVING IN AN UNHOLY STATE.

First.—Disrespect for Christ's word. All those who are morally diseased, and are not making every effort in their power to have all their spiritual maladies healed, disregard and trample upon the words of our divine Redeemer. They treat the Saviour—the *holy one of Israel* with less respect than they pay to their poorest servant. Christ commands all who hear his word to be *ready*; and as an incentive to influence their conduct, he adds, "*For at such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.*" He may come, and we should expect his appearance *this night*; and still they are unprepared! they are *unholy*, and yet they can lie down and sleep contentedly under these circumstances!

Secondly.—Dishonour reflected on Christ's character. Those who are living carelessly in an unholy state, reflect dishonour on the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. To show the turpitude of such conduct, it is only necessary to notice the connection which exists between Christ and the members of his church. Jesus Christ is represented as being the *Bridegroom*, and the *church*, (consequently every member thereof,) as his *Bride*. HOLINESS OF HEART,—ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION, constitutes the wedding garment, without which we would be *utterly unwilling* to enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb, and yet *this very night* we may all be called to celebrate that glorious event.

Suppose that a certain individual was engaged to be married to a lady of distinction and wealth: the wedding day is appointed, and on the evening of that important day, his friends call to accompany him to the lady's residence; but he has omitted to procure a wedding suit, and they find him engaged in idle conversation with some of his neighbors. What apology could he make? perhaps the best excuse which he could offer on the occasion, would be to plead, in extenuation of his conduct, a *defective memory*. Would such a lame defence satisfy the injured, insulted lady, or rescue his character from deserved contempt? Would not the neglected, slighted female, promptly and peremptorily inform him that he must seek another partner for life—one whom he would not so soon forget? We need not apply the case.

There is, however, another view which may be taken of this subject, that should cause all who are living without the wedding garment, to blush and fly from such a dangerous degrading state. *Christian perfection*, or a state of *entire sanctification*, simply implies, that we must love God *supremely*, with an undivided heart. This *love* may be illustrated by the affection which exists between the faithful husband and his wife—it will admit of no *alienation*—no *diminution* or *division*. The husband is altogether unwilling for his wife to place her affections (even in part) on any other person upon earth; he would rather meet death in any form than to know that her affections were even partially withdrawn from him, and placed on an improper object.

Suppose, however, that the husband is constrained to suspect that such a state of things really does exist, and he mentions his fears to his companion, who very frankly acknowledges that his apprehensions are well founded; she assures her deeply mortified husband, however, that it is her intention and firm determination to turn away from all others, and place her affections exclusively on him, but it will be at some future period; at least it shall be before her death. Would this declaration satisfy her *injured, degraded, insulted* husband? And yet this is the language which all unholy professors of religion speak unequivocally by their conduct in reference to their offended, insulted Redeemer, the HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, who loved them, and gave his life a ransom for them. Do not such characters say, with the guilty, insulting wife, whose affections were alienated from her legitimate husband and placed upon an improper object, that they intend to love their Saviour at some subsequent period;—when, perhaps, they can no longer enjoy the smiles and embrace of a seductive world;—when the pilfering hand of time has robbed them of all their strength and beauty, and leaves them withering in the arms of the pale messenger?

Can there be any language, or condition on earth more *offensive* and *insulting* to our blessed Redeemer? Even a state of open rebellion against God would be more honourable to them, and less offensive to the Lord Jesus Christ? Hence he declares, that he would rather we

were cold than lukewarm, “so then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.”

Do not, we beseech you, brethren, remain any longer unprepared to meet your God. Arise, and with holy indignation, spurn the *world*, with all its alluring vanities, not only from your *embrace*, but from your *presence*. Keep this treacherous enemy in its proper place. It is only designed to be your servant—to afford you facilities on your journey through the wilderness to the king’s palace—to your divine Redeemer’s domains above—to your Father’s residence on high.

Do not, therefore, place your affections on subordinate objects. Thank a merciful and gracious God for his loving kindness in providing you with all the necessities of life, while you live upon earth. Look through the gift up to the giver. Love not the money, but love him to whom it belongs. Love not your earthly possessions, but him who made them. Love not the good things of life, but love and kiss the hand from whence they are all derived. Neither *love* nor *receive* the honour of men, which is corrupt and quickly passeth away; but seek and love the honour which cometh from God,—which will be perpetuated in heaven, when this insolvent world and all its alluring, fascinating charms shall be burned up.

You desire to be pure and unsullied in your character. If you *love the world more or less*, you form an attachment for the servant, when it is your glorious and high privilege not only to love, but to possess and enjoy the favour and affection of the master.

It would afford conclusive evidence of a weak head and a depraved heart, for a man's wife to live in *ease and splendor*—to ride in her carriage, and rest in a palace, while her husband was doomed to spend his days in *poverty*, and exposed to *hard labour*.

Esteemed and beloved friends, behold your husband the Lord Jesus Christ;—reflect upon his *birth place*—his life of labour, sorrow and poverty;—remember what shame and reproach was heaped upon him by an insulting world. In view of these astonishing circumstances, are you even willing to receive the smiles of that delusive world which so grossly abused your Lord and Master? Will you, with all these facts before your eyes, and the positive injunction of the Lord Jesus to the contrary—will you condescend to receive from such unhallowed hands, pleasures, gratifications, ease, honor, &c.? Be not so unwise, we entreat you, and so far destitute of every truly honorable principle. Do not treat your Redeemer, Friend and Husband, with so much disrespect. Rather imitate the conduct of Uriah, who peremptorily refused to sleep on a bed of down, while Joab and all the thousands of Israel were compelled to sleep *on the ground*.

Emphatically declare, not only by your words, but confirm the declaration by your conduct, that if you cannot love the Lord Jesus supremely, you will not love his enemy more—that you will spurn every advance made by that arch seducer from your presence with indignant contempt.

While we continue to receive and enjoy the smiles and the friendship of the world, we shall continue to be the *enemy of God*; and so long as we continue to love God's enemy, in vain may we pray, "Lord! *sanctify my soul*." While we continue to indulge in the unnecessary gratifications of earthly things, our prayers will continue to be rejected as inconsistent and insincere, and the end will be disgrace and ruin.

The above causes may be considered the principal obstacles which lay in our way, while we are in pursuit of the pearl of great price—of a full and present salvation. But as it is of great importance that every opposing difficulty should be clearly pointed out, and plainly specified; we will now carefully investigate the *desires*, the *intentions*, and the *motives* of our hearts, which, if attended to, in an honest candid spirit, cannot fail to show every unsanctified soul where the difficulty lies; and when the nature of the disease is fairly ascertained, perfect health may soon be secured. We all know that it is indispensably necessary for us to confess and forsake our sins; or they cannot be forgiven; but if we are not conscious of their existence, we shall neither do one nor the other; therefore, if blindness in part continues, death must be the inevitable consequence.

CHAPTER III.

OUR DESIRES, MOTIVES AND INTENTIONS EXAMINED.

LET us now honestly and impartially examine,
First—OUR DESIRES. Can we sincerely and honestly exclaim with the pious Psalmist—“*whom have I in heaven but thee?* and there is none upon earth that I *desire* besides thee!” If this is the language of our hearts, the gracious promise is, “the *desire* of the righteous *shall be granted.*”

If we inquire of ten thousand parents, either in savage, or in civilized lands, are you anxious to see your children all *virtuous*, and *honorable*, and healthy, *even now*; every one of them will reply promptly in the affirmative. This fact alone, should encourage us to look for, and expect the blessing *to-day*. But when we hear Christ say—“*If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?*” It should at once dispel every cloud from our minds.

The grand secret which we are unwilling to learn, is this, we do not *sincerely desire* to possess this blessing; our *desires* are not *pure*; and upon this point turns our salvation, or our damnation.

If the *desire* of your heart is to possess and enjoy both worlds, you will utterly fail—your hopes and expectations will all be blasted—“for let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” It is our double-mindedness—our *desire* to possess and enjoy earthly things, which

places the blessing of *perfect love*—of *entire sanctification*, so far from us, and while we indulge in this earthly, and sensual spirit, all our hopes of *purity*, and of *heaven*, will prove abortive. That which we do *honestly*, and *sincerely desire* to possess, we will make every effort in our power to obtain. Judging by this plain rule, can you say that your DESIRES are PURE?

Secondly—OUR INTENTIONS. God is a discernor, not only of the *desires*, but of the *thoughts* and *intents of the heart*. If we neither *honestly desire* nor *intend* to be cleansed from all sinful defilement, then should we openly avow the fact, and not remain as blots upon the records of Christ's church.

It is of the utmost importance that we should *perfectly* know our own hearts, for should there be only one recess within, with which we are unacquainted, the enemy of God and man, may make that unexplored point his lurking place.

Our *desires* and *intentions* may be definitely ascertained in reference to this world's goods, by adverting to a supposed case. Were an individual to give public notice that he would attend at a stated place on the first day of the new year, and say that he might possibly remain there for the term of two or three days, which, however, was very *uncertain*; but certainly on the first day he would be there; and during his stay in that place, he would present any and every applicant with one hundred thousand dollars. In view of this proclamation, we ask every individual within reach of that favored spot, would you defer your

application until the second or third, if it were practicable for you to be there on the first day?

The unanimous reply would be "*no* ; I would attend and wait on the liberal gentleman the *first* day ; neither would I suffer the inclemency of the weather, nor slight indisposition, nor any other avoidable circumstance to keep me away ; the promise has been made by an *honorable*, as well as a liberal man, therefore, if I attend on the first day, he cannot refuse to give me the proffered boon, nay, I can confidently claim it on the verity of his word ; but if I remain until the second or third day all will be involved in uncertainty ;—I may fail to secure that large amount of money, which would enable me to pay all my debts that I am now unable to meet ; and the balance which would render my little family comfortable for life : consequently nothing but severe illness, or death should prevent me from making application on the *first* day."

Let us now apply the case. Jesus Christ emphatically says—"In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." John xvi, 23, 24.

Do ye really *desire*, and honestly *intend*, to secure this great treasure, a *pure heart*—and is not that blessing included in the above promise? *it is*. But when is *that day*—the *time specified in the text*?

The apostle to the Gentiles gives us that im-

portant information, he says—"Behold, **NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME**, behold *now* is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. vi, 2. Hence we have the time clearly specified—it is **NOW**; there is no *promise for to-morrow*. And yet are you living from day to day destitute of that blessing! nor is this all, you live without making every effort in your power; nay, you can live carelessly, and can indulge in *idle conversation*; you can even *laugh and jest*, under such circumstances, even while the tyrant of the grave is raising the weapon of death to stab you to the heart, while Jesus intercedes for the condemned rebel, and reaches out his bleeding hands of sanctifying mercy; and impressively and affectionately says—*now*, ask in faith, and this *very moment* you shall receive the unbounded treasure of a pure heart and a right spirit, believe and you shall *now* be cleansed from every sinful stain—to-morrow may be for ever too late.

Judging from your conduct, can it be said that you either *desire* or *intend* honestly to receive the blessing of *sanctification* **NOW**? Reason, decides against you; your conduct declares that you only *intend* to accept of it as a *dernier resort*—to save you from ultimately sinking into hell; this is the plain *necessary* conclusion to which we are led by your own inconsistent conduct. Your real *desire* and *intention* is to live in sin, i. e. in the indulgence of sinful lusts—in the enjoyment of the good things of this world while you remain here, and when you can no longer enjoy them—when you reach the borders of the grave—the boundary of eternity; then, (at

that unseasonable hour) you hope to have all your stains (including the love of the world) washed away!!

Thirdly.—Are your motives more consistent and pure than your *desires* and *intentions*?

Were we even to admit the unsound doctrine which some have received as genuine and orthodox, i. e. that there is an *irresistible* principle in our fallen nature constantly impelling us to evil; yet in all our actions and words, our *motives* may and should be PURE. But, if our *motives* are impure, our whole heart must be dreadfully *corrupt*. It is not too much to say that in *every act*, our motives should be to please and honor God; and whenever this ceases to be their real character, they become *impure* and *corrupt*. We cannot in any instance act without a motive.

Were an individual to purchase fifty thousand dollars worth of perishable articles:—were you to ask him what was his *motive* in making the purchase? was it to sell again, or to retain for his own use or to give away? and he was simply to reply—"I do not know; I had *no motive* whatever, in making the contract"—would you not pronounce him a deranged man? And can the children of Almighty God act *without a motive*, and honor their heavenly Father? Or can they act regardless of his approbation, and continue to be pleasing in his sight?

The substance of the following conversations, with some slight alterations, occurred sometime since between a minister of the gospel and two of his pious female friends, and may assist us in the examination of our *motives*, generally.

M. Would you be pleased to see your husband very attentive to please a certain female of suspicious character?

S. No, I would not. I would rather follow him to his grave.

M. When you left the toilet this morning, could you bend your knees before the throne of grace and say—"O Father, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I have arranged my dress and hair to please thee?"

S. No,—I could not.

M. What, then, was your *motive*, for arranging your apparel and hair, as it now appears?

S. In this trifling affair, I know not that I had any *motive*; unless it was that I might not appear singular?

M. Could you then do it in faith?

S. I could not.

M. And does not the Apostle say, that "whatever is not of faith, is sin?"

S. He does make that declaration.

M. Does he not also say, that "without faith it is impossible to please God?"

S. I believe that these are his words.

M. Allow me now to inform you that no rational and intelligent being can act without a *motive*; and your motive in this transaction must have been either to *please God*, or the *people of the world*, or to *gratify your own vanity*; you say it was not to please God; but admit that it was to avoid *singularity*; consequently your motive was to conform to the *customs* and *maxims*, and *fashions* of this world. You are not ignorant of

the fact, that the world and all its fascinating charms are held in very low estimation by Almighty God; and that conformity to its ways is positively forbidden. Its character is more suspicious than that of the female with whom your husband had too much piety and honor even to associate. You are represented as the *Bride*, the *Lamb's wife*. Can the Lord Jesus be pleased to see your solicitude to please his inveterate enemy?

S. Brother C. if our minister is right, what will become of *you*? Brother C. acknowledged that he felt very much like the woman's accusers, when our divine Master said, "let him that is without sin, cast the first stone;" consequently he could not rationally render his christian sister any assistance, and it became necessary to change the conversation: as pious professors of religion, who have formed their opinions, *seldom change them, or alter their course of conduct.*

With another pious and intelligent female friend, he had in substance, the following conversation:

M. Sister, what does the Apostle mean by broidered hair?

S. I do not know—I need information from you respecting his meaning.

M. You believe that knowingly to "broider" your hair would be a violation of a sacred precept, which would produce condemnation?

S. Certainly I do; the injunction is unequivocal in its character.

M. Are you quite sure that your hair is not *now* in a *broidered* state?

S. I believe it is not; it would be very impru-

dent and ruinous wilfully to violate a plain command of God.

M. Were you offered only ten thousand dollars if you would not broider your hair for one day ; and an old intelligent servant of God who was well acquainted with ancient customs, and the oriental languages, was appointed to be your judge—he must examine your head carefully, and report correctly agreeably to his own judgment, would you, during that day, roll and arrange your hair as it is now arranged ?

S. No, I would not ; and for this plain reason, the judge, although he might be an honest man, yet he would be a fallible mortal, and might decide against me, and I should lose the ten thousand dollars through carelessness.

M. And yet you think there is no danger that the righteous Judge will decide against you in the judgment day ! If you are not perfectly satisfied that you are innocent ; or if, as you have admitted, you are ignorant of what constitutes broidered hair, then should you fear the decision of the Lord Jesus in the great day, infinitely more, than the fallible mortal's opinion in the ten thousand dollar case.

S. My hair is arranged in the usual way ; I confess I had not thought seriously upon the subject.

M. Yet were the money pending, you would think and act with greater precaution, than you now do to secure the favor of God, and a crown of eternal life !

S. I frankly acknowledge there is much incon-

sistency in my conduct. My conscience tells me I would be more careful to secure the money than I am to gain the friendship of God and the joys of heaven; therefore I must love the money, and on fair principles of reason, the love of the Father cannot be in me.

M. I am pleased with your candour; and as you see the inconsistency of your conduct in one particular, allow me to point you to another plain gospel precept, which reads, "*Be not conformed to this world;*" and earnestly request you to abandon promptly every custom, however trifling it may be in its nature, which you cannot indulge in to the glory of God; and hereafter do nothing but what you believe will please your divine Redeemer.

S. I cannot promise. I should be singular in my appearance, and pointed at by all my acquaintances. If all—nay, if only a majority of the members of our church would pursue this course, I would gladly unite with them, however offensive it might be to some of my friends.

This candid, amiable and intelligent female, clearly perceived her error and her danger; yet she had not moral courage enough to abandon the seductive, alluring arms of her worst enemy. Alas! alas! what multitudes will be swept down the broad stream of custom and fashion, into the lake of unquenchable fire!

Another worthy and amiable sister, who was under an impression that her minister was too abstemious in his manner of living, and ran into unjustifiable extremes in regard to his food, addressed herself to him in substance as follows:

S. I suppose you could not conscientiously eat a *delicious peach* if it should be presented to you.

M. Certainly, my sister, I could eat it both with pleasure and gratitude. I can use any kind of food, with very few exceptions, and feel a grateful heart for the Lord's unmerited mercies. I cannot, however use for my diet *blood*, or *things strangled*, or that which is offered unto *idols*, because they are positively forbidden in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Any other article of food I can innocently partake of, because it would be lawful to do so; yet would it be highly *inexpedient* for your minister or any other christian, to partake of every offered delicacy indiscriminately—not only because our divine Redeemer has commanded us to *deny* ourselves and take up our cross and follow him; and the apostle says, “for the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and *worldly lusts*, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world”—but for other and important reasons.

Allow me to state a case in point, and propound to you a few plain interrogatives?

S. Proceed. It will give me pleasure to answer any interrogatory which you may propound if I can fully understand its import.

M. Suppose a gentleman engaged to be married to your daughter, holds in his hand a “*delicious peach*,” which he proceeds deliberately to pare, and very politely presents your daughter with the parings, and unceremoniously eats the *peach* himself. Would you be pleased to observe

this *trifling incident*? Would you be induced from the occurrence of this little *unimportant* transaction, to believe that your daughter's prospects in regard to her future comfort and happiness in connection with this gentleman as his bosom companion for life, were bright and flattering? In plain terms, could you persuade yourself to believe that such a character would make a kind and affectionate husband for your daughter?

S. No, I could not; nor should such an animal ever become one of my family, could my authority prevent such an occurrence.

M. The Lord Jesus Christ intimates in plain forcible terms, that we must love him better than father or mother, husband or wife; and in the most unequivocal manner declares, that whatever we do to one of the least of his brethren, he will consider it as done unto himself. Let us impartially apply this case. You are in possession of a "*delicious peach*"—viz: a large well furnished house; you sit down daily to a table spread with all the comforts, and many of the delicacies of life. Occasionally, (it may be every day,) you send a portion of your food and raiment to that poor widow who lives near your residence, in a small cabin; she is pious, and loves her Saviour; consequently the Lord Jesus will acknowledge whatever favor you confer on her, as a kindness extended to himself. Do you not (by a fair inference) send Christ (in the person of that poor widow) the parings, and unceremoniously eat the peach yourself?

S. You use so many earthly comparisons, they embarrass and confuse my mind. Religion is something of a spiritual nature—it relates to the heart, and not so much to our manner of living.

M. Did not our blessed Saviour preach his gospel, and teach the people, by using parables and plain illustrations. And did not he who was rich for our sake become poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich? Did he not bear the cross and despise the shame; and does he not call on all his followers to imitate his example, as well as to obey his precepts?

S. Do you therefore, really think that I should give all my substance to the poor? Would not such a course of conduct be reprehensible and injudicious in the extreme? After all my goods were distributed among my suffering neighbors, they would still remain needy and distressed, and my resources would be exhausted—consequently we must all suffer together.

M. Your views are partially, but not altogether correct. I admit the fact, that you will never be able to raise the poor into a state of affluence and ease; nor would it be desirable to do so, were it even practicable—it would not meet the design of our merciful Creator; they would naturally be induced to love those earthly things, and thereby diminish their love for him who loved and died for them. Neither the rich nor the poor can love God and love this world at the same time. The plain language of scripture is, “if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” You can, however, without wasting your treasure,

or restricting your ability to do good, like your divine Master, come down and live in the same plain humble style which characterizes your poor neighbors. By living in the deep valley of humility and self-denial, you will have not only the virtuous poor for your neighbors and associates, but the example and presence of the Lord Jesus Christ to cheer and comfort you on your way to another and a better world. Then would you have more to give—then would you be enabled to lay up treasure in heaven more abundantly.—You could have it in your power then to make to yourself *more* friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, who might be commissioned to welcome you into everlasting habitations. The righteous Judge of all the earth would then say—“Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” Will not the joys—the *eternal* joys of heaven, be far better, my sister, than all your earthly comforts and honors, which you can only possess here for a moment?

S. Certainly. It would be very foolish to exchange the glories of heaven for the momentary gratification of earthly comforts; but can we not enjoy both?

M. You have propounded a serious and important question. In earthly things, it is always esteemed prudent and safe to adhere strictly to

rule and order. In spiritual things, which refer to our *eternal* destiny, it is more important and necessary to adhere to the rule laid down in God's holy word—"See," saith he, "that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the Mount." I will therefore refer you to a few passages of scripture, and leave you to settle the difficulty with your own conscience, and your Redeemer, agreeably to the best judgment you can form respecting the important subject.

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Mat. vi, 24.

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Luke xiv, 33.

"But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." Luke xvi, 25.

As we shall have to give an account of every idle word we speak, in the great day of judgment, so also shall we have to account for every cent of our Master's money which we have expended; therefore, we should scrutinize our *motives*, very closely in the management of that talent. To assist us in the performance of this necessary and important duty, we beg leave, in conclusion, to relate the substance of a conversation which took place between two brethren—both ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. A. considered his old friend H. rather eccentric in his manners and appearance, and at times quite enthusiastic.

A. Why do you wear that *wool hat*? By your mean appearance, you will destroy your usefulness and render religion offensive to every *respectable* person in society.

H. My brother, do you really believe the word of God?

A. *Certainly I do*; do you think that I am an infidel?

H. I am glad to learn that you are a firm believer. Christ declares unequivocally, that "*whatever ye do unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye DO UNTO ME.*" Again—"Whosoever will do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my MOTHER, and SISTER, and BROTHER."

Suppose your mother was destitute of the necessities of life; her little children suffering for bread; in this situation she is reluctantly compelled to solicit the assistance of a friend—He replies, "Madam, I am really sorry for you, but it is out of my power at this time to afford you any relief; I want, and must have, a *new hat*—I have but four dollars to purchase that article with. I feel very sensibly and painfully for your situation, and if it was in my power, your wants should be redressed."

She wipes her eyes and turns to me—"Can you not, stranger, (though you seem to be poor as well as myself,) give me only a few cents to buy some bread for my starving children? I can suffer the pangs of hunger better myself than I can bear to hear the cries of my poor little offspring suffering for bread." I reply to her humble touching request—"Mother, I have but

four dollars in my possession, with which I intended to purchase a hat; but I can procure one for one dollar, here are *three* dollars, go and buy some bread for your starving children. The hat, it is true, will be coarse and heavy, and to wear it will draw down upon me the contempt of the *proud*, and of the *hard hearted*, as well as of the *giddy* and the *thoughtless*; but I will bear those little inconveniences under existing circumstances." You are an eye-witness to this scene; would you love your *respectable friend* with his *decent* hat, better than your old rustic acquaintance, who disgraces the cause of religion by his mean appearance.

A. If such circumstances really existed, it would change the case very materially.

H. Look at the poor widows and orphans in our highly favored country, placed in a similar situation with the supposed case of your mother; and then cast your eyes over into the dark land of Africa; and into the heathen world generally; all of whom are destitute of the bread of life; and then hear your Saviour say—"These all, are my brethren—I shed my blood for every one of them."

Here the conversation ended, and *A.* went away (like the young man whose history is related in the gospel) sorrowful; silently saying—"These are hard sayings, who can bear them."

If we will *candidly* and *faithfully* investigate the real character of our *desires*, *intentions*, and *motives*, we may clearly perceive the cause of our *barren* and *unsanctified* state.

Let us, therefore, promptly correct those evils which cluster around our hearts, and act righteously, wisely, and faithfully in all things, looking constantly unto Jesus for grace and strength to enable us to perform every act, and to speak every word in such a manner as shall be well pleasing to our heavenly Father : and God who is rich in mercy, will water our souls with the fertilizing dews of heaven, and cause them not only to bloom in *perfect beauty*, but abundantly to bring forth *fruit unto PERFECTION* ; then shall God be glorified by us on earth ; and so an entrance shall be administered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. AMEN.

A P P E N D I X .

HERE is a class of Scriptures which are supposed to be addressed to all God's children, and especially applicable to their condition in the early part of their spiritual existence, and which could not be applied to their case, if sin did not still remain in their hearts,—they are of the following order: “Let us go on to perfection,” Heb. vi, 1. “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, 1 Thes. v, 23. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2 Cor. vii, 1. “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” Ps. li, 10.

It is true, those exhortations and prayers cannot be appropriately applied to a pure and holy child of God; but they are applicable and necessary to every soul stained in the slightest degree with either inward or outward sin; nor will it alter the case one particle whether their hearts never were purified, or whether they received the white garment of holiness when their hearts were created anew in Christ Jesus, or whether they received the great blessing—a *pure heart*, at a period subsequent to their conversion; if they fall into sin through temptation, and defile

their souls more or less; then will it be appropriate for them to use the pious psalmist's rational and fervent prayer—"Create in me O God a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." Or in accordance with the apostle's exhortation—"Cleanse my heart from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and enable me to perfect holiness in thy fear O God." In all such cases it would be the minister's duty to exhort, or pray for them in the language of the apostle—"the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of your Lord Jesus Christ." If christians discover evil principles existing within, self-will, pride, envy, revenge, &c., whether their hearts were previously cleansed from all defilement or not, they should pray promptly and fervently that God would destroy those roots of bitterness, and cleanse the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit. It is only when we are diligently seeking for deeper communion with God, by fasting and prayer, in the exercise of faith, that we can stand securely and keep ourselves in the love of God. It is only by watching unto prayer every moment that we can keep our souls pure from the contaminating influence of Satan.—When we cease to hunger and thirst after righteousness—we cease to grow either in spiritual strength, or in the knowledge and love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is another class of Scriptures which are calculated to admonish God's children, and teach

them a salutary and instructive lesson. In relating the interesting parable of the wheat and tares, our Saviour remarks—"the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, sir, didst not thou sow *good seed* in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, an enemy hath done this. Matt. xiii, 24—27.

"Yet I planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" Jer. ii, 21.

All that proceeds from God is *necessarily good—altogether good*. Nothing tinged with evil, or shaded with error can possibly emanate from his hand; yet from the tenor of the above passages of God's word, we perceive that after the good seed was sown—the noble and right vine planted, an enemy scattered tares in the field, which sprung up with the pure wheat; also the vine, and consequently its fruit, became degenerate. Hence in these texts our danger and our duty are clearly specified. When God creates a new heart, he plants a "*noble, a right vine,*" which, with careful and diligent cultivation, may be made to produce abundantly the good fruit of the spirit, i. e. *love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.*" But should the vine by our own folly, ignorance, or sloth, be

suffered to degenerate, and the fruit consequently become either sour or defective; it does not follow as a natural, or necessary consequence that the vine was not altogether good when it was planted. Our sloth, or unbelief, or self-indulgence has caused this unhappy change. Let us therefore without delay, lop off the withered and rotten branches, and by fasting and prayer, fervently beseech God to send down the purifying and refreshing showers of his grace on our souls, that life and vigor may be imparted to the vine, and *purity* and *sweetness* to the fruit.

By carefully avoiding an unnecessary and unholy connection with the world—"hating even the garment spotted by the flesh"—by giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure, we shall be enabled to experience the fulness and glory of the gracious promise made to God's ancient people, the Jews, when they shall be restored to his favour on earth, and acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as their rightful sovereign—their atoning sacrifice—their Prophet, Priest and King.

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

"It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice, even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it: the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." Isaiah xxx, 1, 2.

There is another class of scripture which should alarm, and cause us all to pray fervently with the

pious Psalmist—"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm cxxxix, 23, 24. They are as follows—"Yea they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not." Isaiah lxvi, 3, 4. "Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols. Wherefore I gave them also statutes *that were* not good, and judgments whereby they should not live; and I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through *the fire* all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I *am* the LORD." Ez. xx, 24—26. "And the Lord said, who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, thou shalt persuade *him*, and prevail also: go forth and do so." 1 Kings xxii, 20—22. "But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of

man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. xxiv, 37—39. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Luke xxi, 34—36. "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." 1 Thes. v, 1—3. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thes. ii, 11, 12.

These solemn and fearful passages of Holy writ, are intended to shew us that with the forward, God may show himself froward. See Ps. xviii, 26. The rebellious Jews were deceived and ruined; and *disobedient* christians should expect a similar result, if they pursue the same rebellious course of conduct. These alarming pas-

sages more than intimate that such will be the result.

The last text cited embraces a declaration of a very alarming character; nor can it be applied to those who are openly wicked—they are not *de-luded*; their conscience condemns them; in their rational moments they will acknowledge they are not prepared to die. It must therefore refer to those who are members of the church;—who openly profess to enjoy the religion of Jesus Christ, and do not discharge the obligations enjoined upon them in the gospel.

Seeing that we are all deeply interested in this all-important subject, it will be prudent to refer to another class of Scriptures, that we may more clearly perceive what are the duties God enjoins on his children under the mild influence of the gospel. “And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” Luke xviii, 1. “Pray without ceasing. In *every* thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” 1 Thes. v, 17, 18. “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” 1 Tim. ii, 8. “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” Ephes. vi, 18.

From the tenor of those passages of God’s word, we do not presume that christians must be *always* on their knees engaged in prayer; they can pray while they are attending to their lawful

employment in life. The above text, however, bind christians to live *always* in a spirit of prayer, which is incompatible with a spirit of *levity*, or *sloth*, or *carking care*. In view of those gospel requisitions—of those words which cannot pass away, have not many of us strong ground to fear that we too may be deceived? If we obey, there is *no fear*. If we refuse, there is no hope. It will therefore be important to examine ourselves by another class of scriptures, for by the divine standard of God's word we shall be judged.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." Luke x, 27. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." 1 John iii, 18. "Then said he also to him that bade him, when thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." Luke xiv, 12, 13.

O how few of us who are called Christ's followers evidence *our love* for the Lord Jesus, by strictly adhering to the above injunction. Surely when the books are opened, our hearts will condemn us, and God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things. Those of us who neglect the plain precepts of the gospel uniformly, cannot rationally hope to enter in at the *straight gate* which leadeth unto life.

There is another class of scriptures which refers to the spirit of christianity, and is much neglected. "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy : for behold, your reward is great in heaven : for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." Luke vi, 22, 23. "But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on one cheek, offer also the other ; and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee ; and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again." 27—30.

If the *spirit* of the above passages be essential to our entrance into heaven, may we not indeed say—"who then can be saved ? And yet we know that not one jot or tittle of God's word can pass away, or fall to the ground—all must stand as immutable as the foundation of eternity. The *spirit* and the *word* are *one* ; and, "if *any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his* ; consequently, those who live without Christ's spirit, and neglect to obey his precepts, and yet expect to be received into heaven, labours under a "*delusion*."

There is another class of scriptures which demands our most serious attention. "Therefore I say unto you take no thought for your life, what

ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment ? Behold the fowls of the air : for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns ; yet your heavenly father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they ? Matt, vi, 25, 26.

“Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow : for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” v. 34. “Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God, believe also in me.” John xiv, 1.

In those injunctions it is not intimated that we are to neglect our temporal business, or indulge more or less in indolence ; but they forbid any and every species of anxiety or discontent after we have performed our duty, which may be thus defined—loiter away *no time*, and waste no money unnecessarily ; and then trust in God unwaveringly. Our little children may teach us an instructive lesson respecting this part of our christian duty. They are not afraid of suffering—they have no anxious *thought* or care about either food or raiment for to-morrow. They know their parents will provide for their wants—thus they honour their earthly parents. Our heavenly Father is not only infinitely better than the best parent on earth, but he has unlimited power to protect and defend his children ; therefore our anxiety and discontent greatly dishonor God, and destroy our earthly happiness, and will clothe us with shame in eternity.

As we are examining things of eternal value, we cannot be too careful; let us advert to another class of Scriptures. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you they have their reward. But when thou doest alms let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly." Mat. vi, 1, 2, 3, 4. "And Jesus saith unto him, see thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them." viii, 4. "How can ye believe which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only." John v. 44. "Wo unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." Luke vi, 26.

It is greatly to be feared that the sentiments embraced in the above passages of God's word, are not generally made the governing principle of action in this day. But it is said we live in a day of great and abounding light. Has then our taper outshone the Saviour's light? It is argued, however, in extenuation of this defect in our manner of giving our substance for charitable and religious purposes—"We let our liberality be publicly known, that others may be thereby excited to follow our example." There is some plausi-

bility in this argument; but it should be used with the utmost caution, and never unless it operates on our feelings as a cross, rather than a gratification, and we are urged to publish our deeds purely by motives of love for Christ and his cause on earth. Respecting our divine Master's important inquiry, "How can ye believe which receive honor one of another?" It is quite probable we are all too remiss—even we who minister in holy things—who are teachers in Israel, are not sufficiently on our guard against the influence of this fatal evil; nor always governed by the high and holy principle therein inculcated. Very few of us, like Paul, are afraid that men will think more highly of us than they should. Too few of us dread the breath of applause; and we are not as fully apprized as we should be of its poisonous tendency. Those of us who love and are willing to receive the honor that cometh from man, while we disregard the honor that cometh from God, by neglecting the plain, salutary precepts of the gospel, should expect to experience the power of that awful declaration already adverted to—"For this cause God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had *pleasure in unrighteousness.*"

To guard against every evil and danger to which we are exposed on earth, there is but one infallible remedy, viz: a *pure heart*, without which we cannot worship God acceptably, or in the *beauty of holiness*; for so far as the heart remains defiled, we will "*take pleasure in un-*

righteousness." It is therefore, a source of unspeakable consolation, to know that it is the will of God concerning us, even our *sanctification*.

By an exercise of faith in the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, God will impart that unspeakable *gift*; and by fervent application—by diligently walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, trusting in the merits of the Lord Jesus, and looking constantly to him for grace and strength, we shall be enabled to overcome all our enemies, and shall receive an inheritance among the sanctified in heaven.

"Ye therefore, beloved seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the errors of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen." 2 Peter, iii, 17, 18.

If God's word must stand forever—if his precepts must be observed or we cannot be innocent;—if a wilful neglect of the sacred injunctions of the gospel, will induce not only defilement, but guilt and condemnation, then may we perceive why a greater number of professing christians do not enjoy the blessing of entire *sanctification*—why they are not *pure in heart*. Reason itself teaches us that those who uniformly neglect the observance of the sacred precepts of the gospel, can no more be pure and spotless in the sight of God, than a man can be honest, who is guilty of robbery. All of us, therefore, who feel ourselves implicated, should promptly ob-

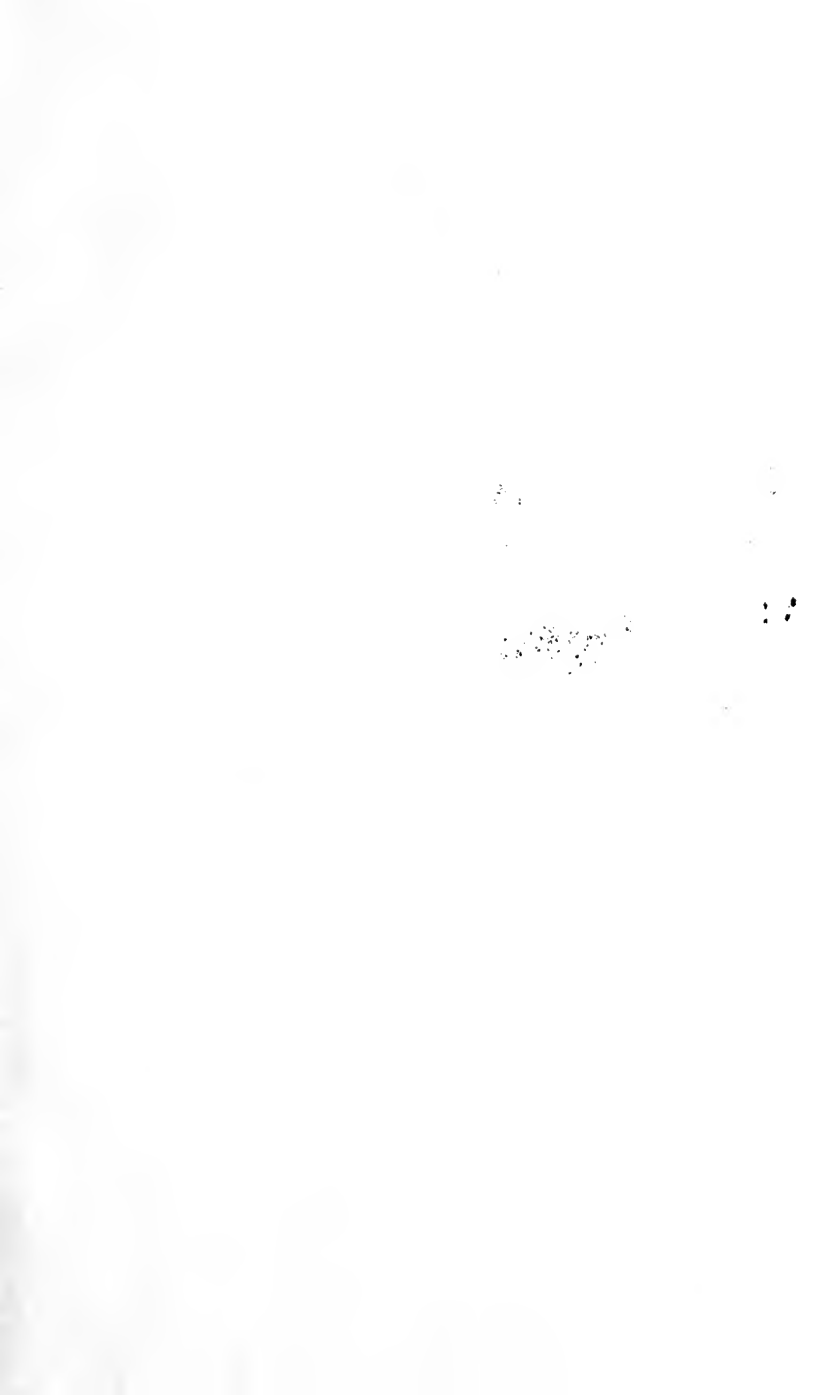
serve the apostle's exhortation, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." James iv. 8, 9, 10.

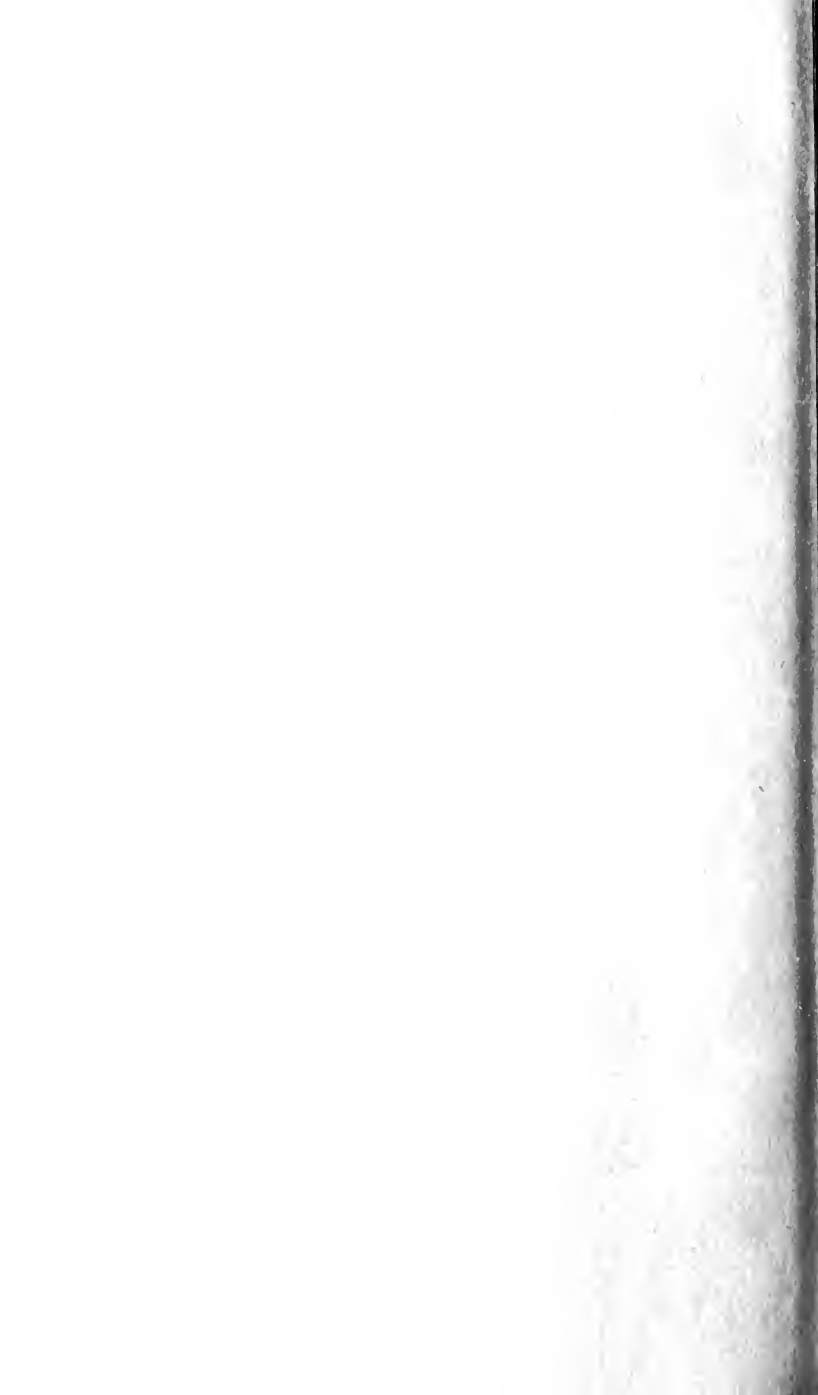
We close our remarks in the language of the apostle to the Thessalonian church—"Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace *sanctify* you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren pray for us. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."



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